The Cell

By
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July 8, 1999
Pink Revisions - July 21, 1999
Blue Revisions - July 26, 1999
Yellow Revisions - August 11, 1999
Green Revisions - September 2, 1999
Goldenrod Revisions - September 9, 1999
Buff Revisions - September 12, 1999
Salmon Revisions - September 14, 1999
Cherry Revisions - September 15, 1999
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White Revisions(2) - September 22, 1999
Pink Revisions(2) - September 23, 1999
Blue Revisions(2) - September 27, 1999
Yellow Revisions(2) - September 28, 1999
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1 A SPECK OF DUST 1

Grains of sand dance in the wind. As we glide over a VAST DESERT, the speck of dust becomes a HORSE AND RIDER. CATHERINE DEANE straddles the beautiful black animal, her mesmerizing eyes scanning the horizon. A curious breeze blows across her exquisite face and she drinks it in, as if the wind itself were telling something to her...

Catherine sees a FLICKERING LIGHT in the sand. She pulls the reins and the horse stops moments before the dune drops into nothingness. She dismounts, affectionately scratches the horse's neck, and follows the LIGHT. When she looks over her shoulder, the Arabian is now a child's WOODEN HOBBY HORSE. Not surprised, Catherine smiles and walks down a dune, sand sliding beneath her feet...

2 She finds herself in a valley of dead trees whose decayed, gnarled limbs appear to form hands. The light dances across her face. She shades her eyes and pinpoints the source... 2

A SMALL MIRROR reflecting rays of bright sun, housed within a locket and chain. It's held by EDWARD, a haunted-looking boy of seven with a precocious grin and piercing eyes. He sits on a fallen tree trunk, patiently waiting for her arrival.

CATHERINE
Thanks for the horse.

He's a shy child, yet comfortable with Catherine.

EDWARD
You liked him?

CATHERINE
He's beautiful...

Edward smiles, delighted he made her happy.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
But I thought we were going sailing.

The boy frowns.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
You promised.

A devilish glint in his eye, Edward redirects the mirror. Catherine follows the flicker to a TOY BOAT in the sand.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
We can't fit in that!

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: 1

Edward shines light in her eyes, momentarily blinding her, then snaps the locket shut. When her vision clears, Catherine sees a GIANT SHIP perched among the dunes. A craft weighing hundreds of tons just sitting there in the desert.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
That'll do.

She walks toward it, but Edward doesn't follow.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
(coaxing him)
Come on, Mister E.

She extends her hand, but he adamantly shakes his head "no."

CATHERINE (cont'd)
What now?

EDWARD
(nods at the ship)
's broken.

3 Undaunted, she... finds herself standing on the DECK. 3

CATHERINE
(calling to him)
Who says?

EDWARD
Mocky-Lock.

CATHERINE
Oh no... No you don't.

EDWARD
"Mocky-Lock is the bogeyman. Mocky-Lock wants me where I am."

CATHERINE
I bet we can fix it.

She opens a rusted iron DOOR. It makes a HORRIFIC SCREECHING SOUND. Similar to metal-on-metal, but more piercing, more pained.... As if made by a living thing. *

CATHERINE (cont'd)
(familiar with the noise, a warning to him)
Ed-ward...

3 CONTINUED: 3

The boy's FACE CONTORTS, turning into something half-human, half-animal. A monster. Mocky-Lock. He SCREECHES, trying to frighten Catherine, but she just cocks her head.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
We agreed. No more Mocky-Lock.

The creature sticks its tongue out and DIVES...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Edward!

But it's too late. Edward/Mocky-Lock slithers into the sand and disappears. Resigning herself to failure, she opens the palm of her left hand, revealing a SMALL BUMP in the flesh between thumb and forefinger. She presses hard and...

PICTURE AND SOUND DISTORT AND CHANGE

4 INT. LABORATORY - OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY 4

We are looking at a large SCREEN showing an electronically-generated three-dimensional view of a human brain featuring color-coded neurological activity. In a specific section of the image, cells flash from yellow to red...

PULL BACK TO REVEAL HENRY WEST standing before a CONSOLE containing state-of-the-art COMPUTERS and ELECTRONICS. Standing next to him is DR. MIRIAM KENT. Both wear garb favored by surgeons or microchip assemblers. The impressive, weird computer system HUMS as it shifts programs, the unusual brain image changing colors...

THROUGH A LARGE WINDOW, we see into an ADJOINING ROOM--the PROCEDURE ROOM--within which a HUMAN FIGURE hangs suspended in mid-air by a series of cables designed to simulate flotation. AT THE CONSOLE, Miriam uses a pen to hit specific areas of the touch-sensitive screen, changing the complex CHEMICAL SYMBOLS displayed there.

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, a series of pharmaceuticals are injected into an intravenous tube feeding the sleeve/arm of the figure. A featherweight cloth MASK electronically rises, revealing the sleeping face of Catherine.

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM, as Miriam moves away from the console, HENRY speaks into an intercom microphone...

HENRY
Sing a song of sixpence...

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, there is no reaction from Catherine.

4 CONTINUED: 4

HENRY (cont'd)
Sing a song of sixpence...

CATHERINE
(hoarse, groggy)
A pocketful of rye...

HENRY
Four-and-twenty blackbirds...

Catherine's eyes open.

CATHERINE
Baked in a pie.

IN THE CONTROL ROOM, Henry hits a switch and Catherine is lowered to a pedestal.

WE FOLLOW MIRIAM as she moves from the observation area into the PREP ROOM. There she presses numbers on a keypad to open the PRESSURIZED AIRTIGHT DOOR separating this room from the PROCEDURE ROOM itself.

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, continuing what must be a routine, Miriam checks MONITORS displaying Catherine's vital signs, then moves to the pedestal itself. There, she examines Catherine's eyes, detaches the IV connector, and disconnects the support cables. As she does, we see that Catherine's bodysuit is bizarre and unique, like a hard second skin.

Through the window, we see Henry at the console and he reports...

HENRY
"Mister E." is doing fine.

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM, for the first time, we see there are <u>two</u> elaborate neural monitors. And the "brain" pictured here is smaller. Younger...

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, REVEAL A SECOND FIGURE suspended from the ceiling. A SMALL BOY is lowered to the pedestal and after the child's mask is removed, we see the haunted face of <u>Edward</u>. Clearly, the boy is in some kind of catatonic state.

Miriam hands Catherine an electronic NOTEPAD and before she is fully out of the "dream state," Catherine frantically uses the stylus/pen to write down all she can recall of her experience with Edward.

MIRIAM
Did we go sailing?

4 CONTINUED: (2) 4

CATHERINE
Almost. Mocky-Lock showed up.

MIRIAM
"Mocky-Lock is the bogeyman, Mocky-Lock wants me where I am."

4 CONTINUED: (3) 4

CATHERINE
Mocky-Lock is a pain in the ass.

(Henry communicates with them via the intercom).

HENRY
Where'd he get that, again?

CATHERINE
Mother Goose.

HENRY
That's right...

Catherine tries to coax more information from her memory before returning the notepad to Miriam. Free from the apparatus, she rises and stretches. Miriam takes a penlight and examines the boy's eyes... An emotionless void, oddly beautiful.

MIRIAM
(thinking aloud)
Nursery rhymes, fairy tales, the bogeyman... All preparation for the horrors of the real world.

HENRY
(ON INTERCOM)
Ladies, we have a visitor.

Through the window, we see that Henry has been joined by constantly-fretting facility administrator, BARRY COOPERMAN.

MIRIAM
What's the matter, Barry?

COOPERMAN
Edward's parents are here.

4 CONTINUED: (3) 4

We can see it in Catherine's face--this isn't good news.

5 EXT. CAMPBELL CENTER - DAY 5

Situated in a corporate/industrial area north of San Diego, California, a series of well-secured buildings form a mini-compound. A sign near the gate reads CAMPBELL CENTER - A DIVISION OF SUNERSET INDUSTRIES.

6 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY 6

Although this is a hospital room filled with medical equipment, its sterility has been camouflaged with toys, posters, photographs, and drawings to make ti more "home-y." (Some hint at aspects of Edward's fantasy world.) Every comfort has been provided and no expense spared.

Henry, Miriam, and Catherine, now wearing funky/casual clothes under a lab coat, stand opposite Cooperman. We now are able to see that Catherine wears an antique LOCKET just like the one Edward has in his world.

Sitting on the bed with her catatonic son is ELLA BAINES, an elegantly dressed woman in her late 20's. There is a soulfulness to her, but the husband, LUCIEN BAINES, 50's, possesses the icy demeanor of a corporate tycoon. One might write him off as cold, but we sense a genuine love for his wife and child. Ella smiles and caresses Edward's hair.

ELLA
He needs a haircut.

COOPERMAN
I'll tell the nurse.

CATHERINE
(sensing something in Edward)
He loves when you visit.

ELLA
My husband wonders if that's true.
(delivering bad news)
He wants to place Edward in hospital.

The scientists share looks of surprise and worry.

6 CONTINUED: 6

HENRY
Mr. Baines, I've been working on this project for seven years...

LUCIEN
I realize that, Henry.
(to Miriam)
And I know your work, Dr. Kent, is invaluable to this company...

CATHERINE
But you're not sure about me, are you?

It's clear on Lucien's face that there's some truth in the statement, but Baines is diplomatic in his reply...

LUCIEN
We've waited eighteen months for signs of progress...

CATHERINE
There's been progress.

LUCIEN
Yes, but there is no <u>proof</u> the procedure works. All I have is a belief that your interaction with my son is not a... hallucination.

Catherine is hurt and vulnerable due to exhaustion and the intensity of her experience with Edward, but feels she must defend herself...

6 CONTINUED: (2) 6

CATHERINE (cont'd)
With all due respect, Mr. Baines...
(re Henry, Miriam, and Cooperman)
I didn't design this procedure. I wish I could take credit for it, but I can't. I was chosen to do a job. They picked me. But if you think you can find someone better, someone who's more devoted to your son...

COOPERMAN
No one is doubting your ability...

CATHERINE
Then what is it?

Introspective and solemn-eyed, Lucien takes a moment, then...

LUCIEN
I've invested millions of dollars in this study... And I've convinced others to do the same. I should feel responsible to them, but I don't. I could care less if they see a profit. I'm responsible to Edward, that's all that matters.
(to Catherine)
Just answer one question... When I look into my boy's eyes, I need to know that I'm doing what's best for him.
(looks her in the eye)
Am I?

OFF CATHERINE'S FACE...

6 CONTINUED: (3) 6

CATHERINE
Then I'm asking you to believe. To have faith. I can't offer "proof."

Lucien looks at his child's blank face...

LUCIEN
All right. Just answer one question. When I look into my boy's eyes, I need to know I'm doing what's best for him.
(to Catherine)
Am I?

OFF CATHERINE'S FACE...

6 CONTINUED: (2) 6

OFF CATHERINE'S FACE...

7 INT. A WHITE ROOM - DAY 7

At first, we're not sure where we are or what's happening. It's too bright, the space confining. As our eyes adjust, we seem to be in a bathroom or shower stall. We HEAR a WOMAN CRYING and the camera finds ANNE VICKSEY. Dark circles beneath eyes red and puffy from crying. Hair wet and ratted. Sweater and pants damp and stained. Barefoot, she shivers from cold and fear...

PULL BACK to show more of her surroundings. The white-tiled 10'x 8' room features a SHOWER HEAD, TOILET, and a push-button SPIGOT for drinking water. Two walls are SOLID, the other two MIRRORED, the glass covered by thick clear plastic.

The floor is littered with empty food wrappers--candy bars, juice boxes. In the center of the floor is a DRAIN and above her, on the ceiling, a FLUORESCENT LAMP, also encased in clear plastic.

There is no door.

A mechanism CLICKS. Then a RUMBLING... Anne seems to know what's coming. She presses against the wall, removes her arms from the sleeves of the sweater, hunches down, and raises the garment over her head, forming a tent.

WATER ERUPTS from the shower head. There is no steam, so this water must be cold. Shaking, Anne whispers a count to herself--"One-one thousand, two-one thousand, three...," and so on. The spray hits everything in the room--mirror, toilet, floor--and a food wrapper drifts toward the drain...

ANNE
Thirty.

She peeks up from the tent, but the water has not stopped, and that isn't what she expected. We hear a soft SUCKING NOISE and a CLICK. The wrapper rises on a puddle of water. Anne POUNDS her fist on the wall.

ANNE (cont'd)
(angry, scared)
THIRTY!

A puddle forms around her feet and she realizes the drain has been somehow sealed shut. Her panic intensifies as we hear another CLICK and the water pressure increases.

8 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - CORRIDOR - DAY 8

Catherine sits on the steps outside the lab. In the background, we can see Cooperman escorting Ella and Lucien Baines to the exit. Ella glances over her shoulder and gives Catherine a half-smile. Having just left them, Miriam approaches...

MIRIAM
We're lucky she worships you.

CATHERINE
Why? Because he hates me?

MIRIAM
I wouldn't say "hates." Distrusts, dislikes...

Catherine laughs. Exactly what Miriam wanted.

CATHERINE
What's the verdict?

MIRIAM
We have another six months. And Barry had to push for that.

Catherine wearily nods, expecting as much. Miriam sits next to her, but Catherine's eyes are on the procedure room and computer system.

CATHERINE *
I want to reverse the feed, Miriam. Now * more than ever. *

MIRIAM *
(expected this) *
We've been over this a hundred times. * No. *

CATHERINE *
Why not? What do we have to lose? *

Like a good salesman, Catherine eases into her pitch...

CATHERINE
When I was doing social work, kids always * did better when you took them out of a * threatening environment. A foster home * is scary at first, but eventually they * learn things can be be different. That * not all homes are bad. *
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: 8

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Edward's like that, living in a world that isn't healthy for him. Let's show him a safer place.

Catherine waits for a positive response, but it isn't coming. Frustrated, she stands and steps away.

MIRIAM
All right, say we do it your way... We reverse the feed and bring Edward into your mind. Imagine his shock when he's suddenly thrust into a whole other world...

CATHERINE
I do it all the time!

MIRIAM
But you're a willing participant. You're aware of what's happening...
(concerned)
Besides, who knows what it could do to you. You're already exhausted... Have you been sleeping?

Catherine halfheartedly nods.

MIRIAM (cont'd)
Let me give you something...

She reaches for a prescription pad in her lab coat...

CATHERINE
I'm fine.

MIRIAM
Any nightmares?

Catherine shakes her head "no" and Miriam forgets the pad.

MIRIAM
Good. We need you healthy and relaxed. You're going to eat well, meditate, and exercise.

CATHERINE
Yes, mother.

MIRIAM
Leave the work here. Don't bring it home in this.

She touches her finger to Catherine's head and smiles, but for Catherine, that's easier said than done...

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (3) 8

9 OMIT 9

10 EXT. RURAL HIGHWAY - DAY 10

A GREEN FORD PICK-UP TRUCK cruises down this deserted stretch of two-lane blacktop, the driver carefully maintaining the speed limit. He signals and exits...

11 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY 11

The truck rumbles along a stretch of bump, unpaved road. The area is desolate, depressing, and deserted. It feels like no one's been anywhere near here for years.

12 EXT. ABANDONED FARM HOUSE - DAY 12

Now hidden from the road, the truck parks and the DRIVER, a tall, lean, sinewy fellow, exits the cab. We do not yet see his face. He is soon followed by his DOG...

A magnificent WHITE GERMAN SHEPHERD. We notice a GLINT in its BLUE EYES--the animal's an albino. The driver whistles and the animal follows...

13 INT. THE CELL - OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY 13

From the outside, a passerby would never know this sanctuary existed. Within the foundation of a farm building never completed, we find a chamber in the center of a small room. THE CELL. We hear the WHIR of ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT and notice VIDEO CAMERAS mounted on tripods pointed at it.

13 CONTINUED: 13

We follow CABLES to a massive VIDEO RECORDER--the type used in surveillance, able to record for days without maintenance, and an elaborate TIMING DEVICE connected to a series of VALVES and SWITCHES.

As if in a beatific trance, the driver moves to the window and gently rests his palm on the glass. ANNE MOVES! Arms flailing, mouth gasping, eyes filled with dread. The last spark of life... The driver JUMPS, startled and frightened. Almost shamefully, he turns and hides, unable to look at her. Suddenly, his body tenses and writhes, as if seized by torturous pain. He opens his mouth in a silent scream...

And then, quickly as it came, the pain subsides. Hidden in shadow, he breathes deeply, regaining self-control. He waits... Then moves back to the glass... Anne's dead face floats past him. Almost angelic... He watches her and leans his head against the window, *closer*... And the driver catches his own reflection in the mirror...

Meet CARL STARGHER.

A14 EXT. ABANDONED FARM HOUSE - DAY A14 *

Stargher has hidden Anne's corpse in a secret compartment in * the back of his pick-up--a wooden "box" running the length of * the bed. When he shuts the tailgate, the compartment is * perfectly camouflaged, the truck appearing to haul nothing * but construction supplies. *

B14 He whistles for his dog and the shepherd jumps into the B14 * passenger seat. Stargher shuts it, gets behind the wheel, * and calmly heads for the road. As the truck pulls away, we * linger on the desolate farm and field... *

14 EXT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 14

Small and isolated, the nearest neighbor a block away.

15 INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 15

The place is a mess. Computer print-outs, dirty dishes, unopened mail, videotapes, and notepads cover tables, chairs, and floor. On the crammed bookshelves, psychology texts sit next to volumes on mythology, religion, and the occult. Totems, figurines and artifacts (Central and South American in origin) adorn walls and tables.

As Portishead plays on the stereo, we find Catherine suffering from insomnia, wearing goofy-yet-hip eyeglasses, sweatpants and a UCSD T-shirt, sharing a late-night snack with her pet CAT.

15 CONTINUED: 15

She shuts the refrigerator door and we linger on an odd POSTCARD taped to the surface... a kitschy postcard of a warrior/goddess.

AA16 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE - NIGHT AA16

The green pick-up is parked in the driveway.

16 INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT 16

We MOVE out of shadow, toward a bright focused light, following the albino German Shepherd--VALENTINE--as it enters a VAST SUBTERRANEAN ROOM. Most of the walls have been knocked down, leaving only thick support posts. Valentine finds Stargher in a DUGOUT PIT--about five feet deeper than the rest of the room--polishing a stainless steel table. A bright tungsten work light hangs above, and near it is the chain, cables and hooks of a customized MECHANICAL HOIST.

The dog picks up an unpleasant scent and follows it to a far corner where there are empty jugs of BLEACH sitting next to a long, deep cast iron TUB. Stargher WHISTLES and Valentine obediently retreats to a KENNEL CAGE. Stargher gives him a chew toy and locks the dog inside before moving to the tub...

Soaking in bleach is the nude corpse of Anne Marie Vicksey. The interior of the tub is glazed with gleaming porcelain and the whiteness of her flesh makes it appear as though she is floating in nothingness, but what hypnotizes and appalls are her eyes. Wide open, transformed by the chlorine into something ghostly, they are unforgettable...

As the bleach gurgles down the drain, Stargher lifts Anne from the tub and carries her to the table. He places her face up and dries her with a clean white towel. He moves her limbs, lips, hips, and hands into desired positions then retreats into shadow. In the harsh light, against the shiny table, the bleached body has the quality of an apparition and we almost expect her to move...

We HEAR Stargher remove his clothes and he steps into the pool of light. Nude, we see that his lean, muscular torso is terribly scarred. When he turns his back to us, he find EIGHT METAL RINGS, thick and strong, PIERCED through his flesh. Two columns of four on either side of the spine, running from shoulder blade to just below the waist. *What in god's name are they for?*

Stargher shuts off the work light and moves to an area where he keeps a TELEVISION MONITOR and VCR. He inserts a videocassette taken from the surveillance deck and watches the screen...

16 CONTINUED: 16

A16 In BLACK-AND-WHITE, we see Anne awaken in the cell. Her first moments inside. Disoriented, terrified, trapped, she examines her surroundings... A16

16 Stargher is mesmerized by her fear. Fast-forwarding to her death, he presses a remote and we get SOUND. Anne screaming, begging for her life. Aroused, stimulated, Stargher drinks it in like a symphony. Valentine cowers in the back of his cage, hating this... 16

17 INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 17

Lying on her bed (a waterbed), Catherine sleepily stares at the ceiling, rolls onto her side, and feels herself drawn into the comforter... The folds of the fabric become ripples... Ripples become dunes...

18 EXT. EDWARD'S WORLD - DAY 18

And we find ourselves in the DESERT of EDWARD'S WORLD...

We fly over dunes and come up behind Catherine as she struggles through waves of sand... The TREE TRUNK is up ahead and we glimpse someone hiding inside...

Catherine reaches... MOCKY-LOCK ERUPTS FROM WITHIN THE TREE TRUNK! SNARLING!

19 INT. CATHERINE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 19 *

IN HER OWN BED, Catherine's eyes are open. In sharp contrast to a typical reaction to a nightmare, she remains calm. No sweaty face, no gasp, no reaction at all, really. She might as well have been dreaming of puppy dogs. Wide awake, her eyes return their gaze to the ceiling...

CATHERINE
Go. To. Sleep.

20 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT 20

CHAINS attached to bizarre HOOKS dangle from the ceiling. Admiring Anne's body, Stargher links the hooks to the rings in his back. He presses a remote unit and up in the rafters, a series of GEARS click into motion. The SOUND is torturous as the mechanical hoist LIFTS Stargher off the ground, pulling at the rings, strips of flesh rising. Stargher grimaces, but clearly he wants the pain, *needs it*... As the hoist clicks into another gear, it carries Stargher over the table until his body is perfectly positioned above Anne's.

20 CONTINUED: 20

In the flickering weird light of the television screen, Stargher resembles something from the twisted imagination of William Blake--a levitating demon ready to debauch an innocent angel... With his free hand, he touches himself, chains clinking and swaying...

21 EXT. HIGHWAY BRIDGE - DAY 21

Near a railroad bridge, an expanse of highway spans an almost-bone-dry creek bed. LOCAL SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES have cordoned off the road and divert traffic away from the scene. Gathered beneath the overpass are the SHERIFF, CORONER, CRIMINALISTS, and LOCAL FBI. TWO SEDANS pull to a stop, THREE MEN exit, and identify themselves as FBI...

The fellows in the first car are a bit of an odd couple. Special Agent GORDON RAMSEY is well-groomed, prides himself on professionalism, and follows the Bureau party line. Special Agent PETER NOVAK is rough around the edges, introspective, and intense. A loner who marches to the tune of a peculiar drummer, he's unconventionally handsome with probing eyes. He moves slowly, observing the scene--the world, for that matter--from a unique perspective.

The man in the second vehicle is FBI PATHOLOGIST DR. THEODORE "TEDDY" LEE, a polite, dapper southern gentleman. He moves to join Ramsey as they are met by supervising local agent TRAVIS COLE.

TEDDY LEE
Thanks for waiting, Cole.

COLE
(tips an invisible hat)
Anything for Dr. Teddy Lee.

TEDDY LEE
Much obliged.
(introducing Ramsey)
Special Agent Ramsey...

As Ramsey and Cole shake hands, Teddy is ready to introduce Novak, but Novak is already off on his own, not wasting time with "pleasantries."

RAMSEY
Who found her?

Cole nods at a visibly shaken WORKMAN seated in a patrol car.

COLE
Surveyor for the railroad... 'Bout six this morning.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

As an FBI PHOTOGRAPHER snaps pictures, Novak touches the guard rail, smells the air, and examines road, river, bridge, and sky. His eyes moves from the highway to the riverbank below...

21 CONTINUED: (2) 21

COLE (cont'd)
(informing them)
Appears the skid marks match the tire tracks from Reno... He scraped the rail and lost some paint, too. That's on its way to the lab...

THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S CAMERA FLASHES!

A22 EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY A22

When the flash fades, we find Ramsey donning latex gloves at water's edge, where lies a FEMALE BODY wrapped in plastic and bound by wire. Novak stands away from the rest, knowing the body will tell him nothing new. Teddy puts on his gloves and together, he and Ramsey snip wire and peel back the thick clear plastic. As the photographer reacts to a strong smell, Teddy comments...

TEDDY LEE
Bleach.

As they continue, Ramsey sadly recognizes the face...

RAMSEY
Anne Marie Vicksey.

COLE
She the one from Santa Cruz?

RAMSEY
Just graduated law school. Single mom. Had a two-year-old daughter...

He and Teddy expose the bleached flesh of Anne Marie's torso.

COLE
Jesus H. They all look like that?

TEDDY LEE
Every unfortunate soul.
(to Ramsey)
Someone looking after the little girl?

RAMSEY
Her grandparents. Live over in Davis.

Novak barely acknowledges or interacts with the others. The thoughts coming together in his mind demand his full attention. Cole points at something dark wrapped around the corpse's neck...

(CONTINUED)

A22 CONTINUED: A22

COLE
What's that?

RAMSEY
Something like a collar.

COLE
He puts it there?

RAMSEY
(nods)
He *makes* them.

Ideas forming, Novak wonders aloud/asks Cole...

NOVAK
Water always this low?

COLE
This time of year, yeah. She sure as hell wasn't going to get washed away.

NOVAK
(interrupts)
Coroner's reports ASAP. Preliminary forensics, too. Nobody drags their heels on this.

And again, Novak is off on his own, contemplating the environment of the drop site and the mind of a killer he must catch...

22 OMIT 22

23 EXT. OFFICE PLAZA - DAY 23

A PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN, JULIA HICKSON, shares lunch with her fiancee, JOHN TRACY. They talk, laugh and kiss, not a care in the world...

24 INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - ACROSS THE STREET - DAY 24

As Valentine sleeps on the floor, and local TALK RADIO plays, Carl Stargher watches them, specifically Julia, his eyes never straying from her as his hands work on something unseen...

24 CONTINUED: 24

As John and Julia kiss goodbye, we see what Stargher's been working on--A TOY DOLL. Female. Stripped of its clothes, a single metal ring stuck through its plastic neck. He places it in the glove box, pulls out a bottle of generic aspirin, tosses a handful into his mouth and chews them like candy.

25 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY 25

His lunch finished, Ramsey is on a cell phone talking to his wife. Chain-drinking coffee, Novak reads the PRELIMINARY FORENSIC REPORT on ANNE MARIE VICKSEY. *

RAMSEY
Well honey, what's worse? Doing it yourself or asking your mother for help?
(gets the answer)
Can it wait 'til I get back?
(listens, answers)
I have no idea, Jeannie...

Novak talks to himself/Ramsey... *

NOVAK
Truck paint is Ford Aqua Green... Same brand bleach... More of his hair inside the plastic...

Ramsey covers the phone mouthpiece and comments to Novak...

RAMSEY
More hair? Jesus, I could knit this guy a toupee.
(responding to his wife)
No sweetie, I'm here. Well, all right. Good luck with the Monster. I love you too. Bye-bye.

Ramsey snaps shut the cell phone.

25 CONTINUED: 25

RAMSEY (cont'd)
We call Jeannie's mother "The Monster" because, well... she just is.

Novak is oblivious, poring over information.

RAMSEY (cont'd)
I know you could care less about my personal life, Peter, but I do appreciate the occasional, "How's your wife, Gordon?"

He waits. And Novak obliges...

NOVAK
How's your wife, Gordon?

RAMSEY
Pregnant. Thanks for asking.

Novak is distracted by Teddy Lee entering the diner...

NOVAK
(blandly)
Congratulations.

Ramsey knows the exhausted, lonely, intense man sitting across from him is not paying attention...

RAMSEY
We're thinking of selling the little guy to the Russian Mob...

Novak catches Teddy's eye and waves him over.

RAMSEY (cont'd)
... Should help out with the mortgage payments....

TEDDY LEE
Hot off the presses...

He drops onto the table copies of the AUTOPSY REPORT on Anne Marie Vicksey. The WAITRESS sees Teddy, approaches, and offers a menu...

25 CONTINUED: (2) 25

TEDDY LEE (cont'd)
(doesn't need it)
Chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes, garden salad with Thousand Island dressing and an iced tea. Thank you darlin'.

She nods and moves to the kitchen.

TEDDY LEE (cont'd)
(saving them some time)
Nothing new, gentlemen. Match on his semen... Water in her lungs shows high levels of chlorine and rust...

RAMSEY
(all-too-familiar)
... From being stored in some kind of tank...

This is about as exciting to Novak and Ramsey as losing lottery numbers. Bored, Ramsey gives up on preliminary forensics and switches to autopsy. Teddy picks up Ramsey's copy and starts reading, the last page first. Always meticulous, Novak scrutinizes every word of forensics before giving up...

TEDDY LEE
Just got off the phone with Annabel, Peter, she says hello.

Everyone continues reading while conversing....

TEDDY LEE (cont'd)
Wants to have you boys over for dinner when we get back to Quantico. My wife's a hell of a cook, Gordon, you'll like her. You bring the little woman, of course...

RAMSEY
Thanks Teddy.

NOVAK
(not looking up)
The "little woman" is pregnant.

TEDDY LEE
(delighted)
My, my, my... A blessed event. When's she due?

25 CONTINUED: (3) 25

RAMSEY
February 12th.

TEDDY LEE
Aquarius. That's...

Teddy finds something in the report that forces him to stop and he asks...

TEDDY LEE
Now what, prey tell, is this?

He lays the page flat on the table.

TEDDY LEE (cont'd)
Says they found some dog hair...

The waitress arrives with his iced tea. Thirstily, he drinks and announces...

TEDDY LEE (cont'd)
Heaven. Thank you, angel.

As she smiles and leaves, Ramsey looks at the page. Novak finds it in his copy of the report.

RAMSEY
From a K-9 unit?

TEDDY LEE
There was no K-9...

Teddy wipes a few drops of condensation off the page, sees something unusual, and holds it up to the light coming through the window. Novak recalls something significant...

NOVAK
Anne Marie didn't have a dog...

RAMSEY
Wait a minute. Even if this is <u>his</u> dog...

Although Teddy is looking at a PHOTOCOPY of the hair in question, something fascinates him. He puts on reading glasses and scrutinizes...

TEDDY LEE
I want to see it.

NOVAK
Me too.

25 CONTINUED: (4) 25

RAMSEY
But...

TEDDY LEE
Gordon? Indulge me.

26 INT. FORENSIC LABORATORY/MORGUE - DAY 26

A MONITOR shows a SINGLE HAIR under a video microscope. Teddy Lee plays with the dials and gets a spectral view...

TEDDY LEE
Complete absence of melanin.

Novak and Ramsey stand over his shoulder and we glimpse Anne Vicksey's naked autopsied body in the background.

RAMSEY
And that means...?

TEDDY LEE
The dog's an albino.

NOVAK
(pictures it)
God. He'd love an animal like that.

Teddy moves aside and takes another bite of his lunch (chicken fried steak now carry-out).

TEDDY LEE
Gentlemen, I believe an albino dog is rare indeed.

27 INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT 27

Exiting an elevator, Julia heads for her little Toyota. Smart girl that she is, her eyes scan the area and her fingers hold a can of MACE. Unfortunately, she cannot know that the green pick-up truck parked two rows away is something of which to be terrified...

28 INT. TOYOTA - NIGHT 28

Julia climbs in, checks her mirror and backs up... WHAM! *Did she hit something?* She brakes, puts the car in park, and checks her sideview mirror...

Reflected there is a WOUNDED DOG. A white German Shepherd. She rolls down her window and can hear the poor thing whimpering...

JULIA
Oh no...

29 INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT 29

Julia exits the car and kneels next to Valentine, who appears to be in terrible pain.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

JULIA
God... I didn't see you...

STARGHER'S HANDS COME AT HER FROM BEHIND! One grabs her hair and the other covers her face with a chloroform-soaked towel. He presses so hard, she cannot scream, cannot move. After a brief struggle, she passes out. Stargher pulls a dog treat from his pocket and WHISTLES. The Shepherd instantly perks up. Perfectly healthy.

And before he carries her away, he leaves the augmented TOY DOLL on the driver's seat of the Toyota.

A30 INT. RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF'S STATION BUILDING - DAY A30

In a small OFFICE on loan from the state cops, we find Novak dry-brushing his teeth. Having been slept in, his suit is rumpled and there's more than a five o'clock shadow visible on his face. *

RAMSEY (O.S.)
Jesus Christ.

A rested, clean-shaven, fresh-suited Ramsey stands at the door. *

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Thought you were gonna get some sleep and clean up. *

NOVAK
Yeah, well, I didn't.

Stiff and aching from sleeping in the chair, Novak rises and stretches. *

RAMSEY
They're waiting for us, you know. *

Novak rinses with cold coffee and spits back into the Styrofoam cup. *

NOVAK
Ready.

Ramsey shakes his head at his dishevelled partner and is out the door. Novak slips into his shoes, uses his hand to comb his hair, and follows... *

30 INT. RIVERSIDE COUNTY SHERIFF'S STATION BRIEFING ROOM - DAY 30

Ramsey, Teddy Lee, and Novak stand before a group of SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES, LOCAL FBI, the SHERIFF, and Cole. This information is new to the locals, so they're patient and attentive. Ramsey stands before PHOTOGRAPHS of each of Stargher's VICTIMS, stating each name as he passes...

RAMSEY
Donna Korzin, Helen Francis, Teresa Manicki, Antoinette Carter, Natalie Pagels, Grace Cassatt, and Anne Marie Vicksey.

Every person is solemn and focused.

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Each of them a sweet, smart, attractive young woman. A few just got that first big job... Some were going to college... Anne Marie was raising a daughter on her own, going to law school at night...

He's hooked them. The victims, these women, now mean something to them. With great effect, he holds up grisly post-mortem photos.

RAMSEY (cont'd)
These girls were kidnapped, tortured, and murdered by a white male about 30 years old. He drives a '92 aqua green Ford pick-up...

Ramsey's waiting to drop the bomb...

RAMSEY (cont'd)
This man... This killer... owns an albino German Shepherd.

Suddenly, awareness is heightened.

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Breeders typically destroy albino pups, so this animal's quite unique.

TEDDY LEE
... And well-cared-for. They're prone to health problems, so he devotes a lot of time to the creature.

COLE
Any chance this isn't his dog?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 30

COLE (cont'd)

Novak fixes his gaze on Cole and finally speaks...

NOVAK
It's his dog.

He holds up two thick booklets.

NOVAK (cont'd)
We're going to do this two ways...
Breeders of Shepherds. Ford dealers.

The lists are long and a few of the cops GROAN. Novak silences them with a fierce look that says *"I will not rest until this man is found and neither should you."*

NOVAK (cont'd)
Be thorough, but be fast. This guy's accelerating. He only waited six days this time... When he started, months could pass. Now this can mean two different things... One, he thinks we're stupid and we'll never catch him...

A DESK SERGEANT enters the room and hands a FAX to Ramsey. Novak is curious about it, but continues...

NOVAK (cont'd)
Or Two... And this is what I believe...
He wants to be caught.

Gravely concerned, Ramsey moves across the room...

NOVAK (cont'd)
(explains to them and himself)
The dog hair thing is sloppy... And he left Anne Marie's body in less than three inches of water. He knew we'd find her. But even if I'm right, if we can't stop him... He can't stop himself.

As it is handed to him, Novak dreads what is on that fax...

30 CONTINUED: (2) 30

31 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY 31

A naked Stargher is in the bathtub, desperately trying to stay calm as awful pain ravages his skull. He rises and moves for a bottle of aspirin in the medicine chest...

DISTORTED VOICE
Me god feed on pain.

The tablets spill onto the floor, the VOICE echoing inside his skill...

DISTORTED VOICE (cont'd)
Pain good. Cumm home to meee...

32 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 32

Struggling to stay on his feet, he moves to the KITCHEN. Valentine paces nervously, whimpering concern. Stargher reaches for a bottle of vodka... And falls to the floor. Valentine BARKS, but gets no reaction from master. We MOVE IN on Stargher's unblinking eyes...

DISTORTED VOICE
Go sleep Carl. Me god wake up now.

33 INT. THE CELL - DAY 33

Julia Hickson finds the snack foods, drinking spigot, toilet shower, and drain. Her bare feet try to adjust to the tile floor, but it's fucking cold. She glimpses herself in the mirror and is startled by what she see--a *terrified girl.*

34 EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY 34

A TAN SEDAN sits in the driveway of this modest middle-class home. A VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S CAR sits nearby, a deputy keeping watch.

35 INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY 35

Julia Hickson's college graduation photograph is handed to Novak by her mother, MRS. HICKSON.

MRS. HICKSON
Will this be all right?

NOVAK
Yes ma'am, thank you.

Seated next to her on a sofa in the LIVING ROOM is JOHN TRACY, whom we saw in the plaza. A gentle, compassionate young man, he provides comfort to his future mother-in-law in this horrible moment...

RAMSEY
She's still living at home with you, ma'am?

Mrs. Hickson sadly nods.

JOHN
We just started looking at apartments...

MRS. HICKSON
... But they're not moving in together until after the wedding. Julia wants to be married.

Novak nods and smiles, trying to portray some sense of reassurance, but it's difficult.

RAMSEY
John? Last night. What time did you get here?

JOHN
A little before eight. We were going out for my birthday.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: 35

RAMSEY
Did she ever talk about feeling... I don't know... Like someone was watching her, following her?

John shakes his head no. Ramsey's cell phone rings.

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Pardon me.
(answering)
Ramsey.

Listening to the caller, he excuses himself to a corner of the room, leaving Novak alone to deal with this uncomfortable, sad situation.

MRS. HICKSON
What if you made a mistake? Maybe it wasn't this man... Maybe Julia is safe...

Unfortunately, Novak must tell her the truth...

NOVAK
I'm sorry, ma'am, but there are things he does that tell us it's him.

She knew that was the case but... An uncomfortable silence follows. Deeply distraught, with frayed nerves, Mrs. Hickson finds herself telling Novak...

MRS. HICKSON
Julia is my only child... She is and always will be my miracle...
(continues with tearful difficulty)
Last year, I lost my husband to cancer. In the end he experienced such terrible pain... If it weren't for my daughter, I wouldn't be here today. She's a very strong girl. Much stronger than me...

The woman's frightened eyes pierce Novak's like a stiletto.

MRS. HICKSON (cont'd)
Julia is my life... She saved me. Bring her home.

35 CONTINUED: (2) 35

She has issued him a challenge and it unsettles Novak. Ramsey returns and, for the sake of the mother, betrays no sign of the excitement building within him...

RAMSEY
Pete? We have to go.

Novak sees the excitement, though. And rises... Tight-lipped, Ramsey moves for the door, urging Novak to follow. As he leaves, Novak senses John's frustration and can feel Mrs. Hickson's eyes ripping into his soul...

36 EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY 36

The agents move to their car...

NOVAK
Mind telling me what's going on?

Away from the family, Ramsey explains...

RAMSEY
Riverside Sheriff found a breeder in Woodcrest... Three years ago, she had a buyer for an albino Shepherd pup. They checked DMV and guess what? Son of a bitch drives a '92 Ford pick-up. Aqua green.

Novak feels a surge of adrenaline...

NOVAK
What's his name?

RAMSEY
(checks his notes)
Carl Rudolph Stargher.

Novak climbs into the passenger seat, trying to suppress any optimism, having been burned too many times in the past...

37 OMIT 37

38 EXT. SMALL AIRPORT - DAY 38

Ramsey and Novak exit a small jet and are met by FBI Agent STOCKWELL...

STOCKWELL
Ramsey, Novak?

They nod and he directs them to a waiting GMC SUBURBAN.

STOCKWELL (cont'd)
Agent Stockwell.

NOVAK
Where is he?

STOCKWELL
Edison. Just east of Loma Park. SWAT's had the house under surveillance for about twenty minutes.

He hands Novak a FAX.

STOCKWELL (cont'd)
(info memorized)
Stargher has no registered weapons and no priors. Has a license for his dog, though... Named him *Valentine*.
(to Novak)
Medic team's on standby, as requested.

39 INT. GMC SUBURBAN - DAY 39

Shotguns and body armor line the cargo area. Stockwell is behind the wheel, racing down the highway. Ramsey's in the passenger seat, Novak in back. Novak's eyes target the FAX, a copy of Stargher's license and registration, and the grainy dot-matrix image of the suspect's face... *And Novak knows he's found him*

NOVAK
You're the bad man, aren't you Carl?

40 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE/NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY 40

A sparsely populated lower middle class neighborhood. A half dozen plain houses at the end of cul-de-sac. Bare trees. Brown lawns. The house furthest from the main road has a agua green Ford F150 pick-up in the driveway.

THE SUBURBAN, hidden from Stargher's house, stops outside the backyard of a PRESCHOOL, where two more Suburbans and a van already wait.

41 INT. PRESCHOOL - DAY 41

Stockwell introduces Ramsey and Novak to Brock, leader of the FBI Tactical Unit, a calm, confident ex-Marine wearing a black uniform and body armor.

BROCK
(macho sarcasm)
Glad you could make it. We lose the sun in half an hour.

Novak and Ramsey join him at a shaded window to observe Stargher's house. Children's drawings fill the wall. As Brock explains, Novak checks with binoculars.

BROCK (cont'd)
Perimeter's two hundred yards around the house. Three men at the rear, two on each side, four up front. I've got two marksmen on the roof...

NOVAK
Have they seen him?

BROCK
No. Just some movement in the kitchen... Can't tell what it is.
(important)
You think she's in there?

Novak is careful with his answer...

NOVAK
We proceed assuming she is.

RAMSEY
Let's give old Carl a call. Tell him he's got company...

41 CONTINUED: 41

NOVAK
No...
(to Brock)
Can you get a man close?

42 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY 42

Quiet. Calm. And then we catch a glimpse of a FIGURE advancing, using any cover he can, until he is right outside the house. The sneaky SWAT team member, ALEXANDER, whispers into his throat mic...

ALEXANDER
I'm at the back door.

BROCK (V.O.)
(in Alexander's earpiece)
Check the kitchen.

Alexander maneuvers his way to the kitchen window and uses a MIRROR to sneak a peek... In the REFLECTION, we see a *motionless man lying on the floor.*

ALEXANDER
I have a man down. Repeat, a man down.

BROCK (V.O.)
Stargher?

Alexander chances a quick visual check and pops his head up before reporting.

ALEXANDER
Can't see his face...

43 INT. PRESCHOOL - DAY 43

Brock looks to Novak, urgency and tension mounting... Novak knows how much is riding on this specific moment... All the various outcomes... And decides.

NOVAK
Go.

44 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY 44

THE SWAT TEAM SWARMS TOWARD THE HOUSE...

45 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY 45

45 CONTINUED: 45

BAM! FOUR MEN KICK IN AND PROCEED THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR!

SWAT TEAM MEMBER
FBI!

An odd quiet is all they encounter. IN THE BACK, Alexander moves through a LAUNDRY ROOM and find Valentine hiding behind a pile of dirty clothes, frightened by these masked figures in black.

ALEXANDER
(into throat mic)
I've got the dog.

He points for someone to secure the animal and MOVES into the KITCHEN, aiming his gun at the man on the floor, finally getting a look at his face...

ALEXANDER (cont'd)
(recognizing him)
Carl Stargher! Do not move!

No problem there. Stargher appears lifeless. As various SWAT team members secure the house, Alexander removes his mask and CUFFS Stargher, startled at the sight of the horrible RINGS piercing his back.

ALEXANDER (cont'd)
Jesus Christ...

46 EXT. PRESCHOOL/STARGHER'S HOUSE - DAY 46

As an AMBULANCE emerges from a hiding place behind another garage, we FOLLOW NOVAK and RAMSEY as they run from the preschool INTO THE HOUSE...

47 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY 47

As a K-9 UNIT secures Valentine, Novak storms into the kitchen, checks Stargher for a pulse and barks at SWAT...

NOVAK
Paramedics. NOW.

Ramsey pushes through and Novak informs him...

NOVAK (cont'd)
He's alive.

48 OMIT 48 *

49 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY 49 *

The area has been cordoned-off by the police. Valentine is muzzled and led away as the PARAMEDICS wheel out Stargher on a gurney. Agent Stockwell turns to a worried Novak... * * *

STOCKWELL
They'll take him to County General. Reid's already there.

NOVAK
Make sure he stays cuffed, two men on him at all times. I don't want anyone treating him but Reid. Not so much as a thermometer up his ass. Understand?

Stockwell nods and follows the stretcher. A stoic Ramsey approaches and Novak can see the disappointment in his eyes... * *

RAMSEY
She's not here.

Novak would give anything for that not to be true.

RAMSEY (cont'd)
(it gets worse)
You should come downstairs.

50 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY 50

Ramsey leads Novak into Stargher's "workroom." It's all here, the table, the piercing supplies, the bleach. An odd, grisly collection of DOLLS fills cubby holes in a wooden storage/shelf unit. Novak's eyes are like a camera, documenting and storing as much information as possible, but it's overwhelming...

He moves through the basement, careful not to touch anything. He stops and focuses on the hoist and eight hooks situated over the stainless steel table... (*NOTE - On the winch's motor is a worn plaque reading CARVER INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT, BAKERSFIELD, CALIFORNIA, with a logo).

A50 Ramsey switches on the video monitor and the screen fills with images of Anne dying in the cell. A50

50 CONTINUED: 50

Novak is painfully, tragically drawn to this... Although he has seen his share of horrific things, Novak is truly disturbed by the sight of Anne, desperate to escape, drowning, slowly dying, and he knows... *This is what will happen to Julia Hickson unless he finds her.*

51 INT. THE CELL - NIGHT 51

CLICK. WATER SPRAYS FROM THE SHOWER. Caught by surprise, Julia blocks the spray with her hands and searches for a shut-off valve. Of course there is none. Thirty seconds later, the water stops. Like an animal caught in a trap, Julia's eyes dart around her "cage." *What kind of hell is this?* Shivering, she catches her reflection and looks deeply into it. *Something's odd about the glass... Is someone watching* her? She bangs on it with her fist.

JULIA
HEY!

POUND, POUND, POUND!

JULIA (cont'd)
LET ME OUT!

But there's no response. Only her reflection.

52 INT. KERN COUNTY HOSPITAL - EXAMINATION ROOM - NIGHT 52

A HUMAN EYE. No movement, no deviation of the iris. A fixed stare. The catatonic Stargher lies in a hospital bed, wrists cuffed to the frame. An i.v. feeds him fluids and monitors report his vital signs. As a nervous NURSE exits, we see TWO POLICEMEN standing guard in the outer hallway. Novak, Ramsey, and Teddy Lee stand by as the killer is examined by DR. MILTON REID, a brilliant forensic M.D. currently shining an opthalmoscope into Stargher's eyes. He pulls away and checks the ELECTROENCEPHALOGRAM already on a lightbox.

52 CONTINUED: 52

REID
You ever hear of *Whalen's Infraction*?

Clearly not.

REID (cont'd)
It's a form of schizophrenia. Very rare. Very severe.
(re the EEG)
In any schizophrenic, these areas would be affected... But in someone with Whalen's, they're hit hard and hit fast.

TEDDY LEE
What about loading him up with Thorazine or Desoxyn?

REID
Normal psychotropics don't work.

Novak's worry intensifies.

REID (cont'd)
This thing is caused by a virus that infects the neurological system in utero. It lays dormant until it's triggered by some kind of stress or trauma... Most likely, he's exhibited symptoms for a while now, but the infraction--the breach-- didn't occur 'til today. You never know when it'll happen... At what age... Or why. The triggers vary, but the results don't... He's not just catatonic, he's *disappeared*. Like having a dream and never waking up.

RAMSEY
For how long?

REID
Forever.

Novak, Ramsey, and Teddy Lee look like they just got hit by a Mack truck.

REID (cont'd)
There've only been about sixty or seventy documented cases... But they never come back. He has no conscious awareness of this world or the people in it. Reality's been cut loose and... Hello Fantasyland.

52 CONTINUED: (2) 52

Novak's either going to tear the place apart or collapse. He presses Reid...

NOVAK
I think you're missing the big picture here, Reid. The missing girl? Julia Hickson? Only he knows where she is.

REID
Then I'm sorry. For her and for you.

Novak is past angry. He's bordering on devastation. Ramsey attempts to placate him...

RAMSEY
We'll go back to Stargher's house, Pete. There's still a lot we can do... Analyze the videos, track sales of the bleach, go through his records... Maybe he owns property somewhere..
(MORE)

52 CONTINUED: (3) 52

RAMSEY (cont'd)

NOVAK
(losing it)
That's a great idea, Gordon. And maybe we'll find her some time next fucking year.
(respectful, but intense to Reid)
He keeps them in this thing for forty hours, Reid. Four-Oh. He took Julia at seven-thirty last night... Know what time it is now?

Reid is sensitive to his friend's pain and stays passive and tranquil...

REID
Peter, you know me. If there were anything... Anything...

If this were a cartoon, a light bulb would appear over Reid's head. And Novak would see it.

NOVAK
What?

REID
Nothing.

NOVAK
No, no, no. You tell me.

Reid is very reluctant to mention it, but...

REID
This is a real longshot...

All eyes turn to him.

53 EXT. EDWARD'S WORLD - DAY 53

The ship's engine ROARS TO LIFE and the PROPELLER spins through sand.

CATHERINE (O.S.)
It's fixed!

AT THE TREE TRUNK, Catherine extends her hand and suddenly Edward is there, quite close, reaching out... Catherine's hand trembles... The boy is startled...

53 CONTINUED: 53

CATHERINE (cont'd)
(surprised, to herself)
I'm not signalling...

Her hand tenses and shakes uncontrollably.

A VOICE (O.S.)
Sing a song of sixpence...

CATHERINE
(angry, to the heavens)
I'm not signalling!

Edward is frightened by what's happening and runs away. Catherine tries to call out, but her throat constricts, making speech difficult...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I'm not...

54 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 54

Catherine's face is covered by a cloth floating down from the sky. The sky is replaced by the ceiling and overhead lights of the PROCEDURE ROOM and Miriam's face. Now conscious, [illegible] in the lab at the Campbell Center, the [illegible] lowering...

HENRY
(on intercom)
[illegible]g a song of sixpence.

CATHERINE
(hoarse)
A pocketful of fucking rye.
(worried, angry)
What's wrong?

MIRIAM
Relax, relax...

CATHERINE
Why did we stop?

Miriam nods at the OBSERVATION ROOM and through the window, we see Cooperman flanked by two men in suits Catherine doesn't recognize--Novak and Ramsey.

COOPERMAN
(on intercom)
I asked them to, Catherine.
(with gravity, re the suits)
We have a situation...

55 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 55

A TELEVISION MONITOR displays video footage of Anne Marie Vicksey in the cell.

In the austere, cold, formal meeting area of the Campbell Center, seven people are gathered around a long table, watching the screen. On one side are Catherine, Miriam, and Henry. Before them are PHOTOGRAPHS of the catatonic Carl Stargher and a medical report from Dr. Reid.

Opposite them are Novak, Ramsey, and Cooperman. Novak watches the scientists. He wants them to see, to understand the pain and terror of the victims...

NOVAK
Stargher provides food, drinking water, and a toilet. Every so often, a shower starts. I think he wants them to believe this is a simple kidnapping, that there's a possibility of rescue, of survival. But it's just a form of torture... At the end of forty hours, the water starts and does not stop.

He hits the MUTE button and the relief is palpable. The images continue throughout the scene, but Anne Marie's screams are thankfully hushed.

HENRY
(intrigued, rhetorically to Miriam)
What are the odds of Whalen's infecting a serial killer...?

Not really listening to Henry, Miriam looks at the photos of Stargher and asks...

MIRIAM
When did he lapse into coma?

RAMSEY
Sometime yesterday morning. We can't be sure of the exact time...

Novak's eyes are on the scientists. Henry's curiosity is piqued, but the women are hesitant. He knows it.

NOVAK
At the request of Mr. Cooperman, we contacted your Board of Directors...

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: 55

COOPERMAN
They've given their approval. So have Lucien and Ella Baines...

RAMSEY
... But the decision is yours.

Ever practical, Miriam questions Ramsey...

MIRIAM
What are the legalities of this?

RAMSEY
Because of his condition, Stargher doesn't have the ability to waive his rights...

MIRIAM
So what you're asking us to do is illegal.

NOVAK
Not necessarily. If we weigh his rights against the possibility of saving a human life, the Law favors the victim. It's called the Public Safety Exception.

Miriam nods and it appears she's giving it serious thought...

MIRIAM
There are certain ethical considerations we'd have to make...

Novak has made a persuasive, heartfelt argument and he knows it. Cooperman polls the team...

COOPERMAN
Henry?

HENRY
Yes.

COOPERMAN
Miriam?

Emotional, disturbed by the images, she nods affirmatively, but has a caveat...

MIRIAM
But it's really up to Catherine. I support whatever decision she makes...

55 CONTINUED: (2) 55

And Catherine isn't sure. Something about the idea of this just strikes her as *wrong* and she questions the FBI...

CATHERINE
Can I ask you something?

NOVAK
Please.

CATHERINE
If he wasn't like this... If he was conscious... Do you think he'd tell you where she is?

NOVAK
There's always the chance of confession...

Novak's perturbed that she's still not on board and explains...

NOVAK
Things he did show a need for disclosure. He's never had a sympathetic ear, so he wants someone to listen, to understand...

CATHERINE
Look, I feel for this girl, I do, but Stargher may no longer know the truth. For a severe schizophrenic, there's no discerning between fantasy and reality.

NOVAK
(relentless)
Is it possible?

CATHERINE
If he came to trust me, yes, but it takes months to earn that kind of trust... With the amount of time I'd have, it would be like trying to find a needle in a haystack.

Cooperman, Henry, and Miriam are swaying toward Catherine and Novak feels it. He isn't proud of what he's about to do, but he's willing to use any weapon now... He releases the MUTE button and the team is assaulted by the terrifying, chilling, painful pleas of Anne Marie Vicksey...

NOVAK
Seven tapes.. Seven women dead.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (3) 55

He reveals a PHOTO of Julia Hickson.

NOVAK (cont'd)
She'll be number eight.

Catherine's eyes lock onto the picture...

WHOOP-WHOOP-WHOOP-WHOOP. POUNDING REVERBERATIONS...

A56 OMIT

56 EXT. CAMPBELL CENTER - DAY 56

WHOOP-WHOOP-WHOOP-WHOOP. A HELICOPTER descends onto the pad. A stretcher is removed from the side door of the helicopter.

57 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - VARIOUS/TRAVELLING - DAY 57

The STAFF watches with a mixture of fear and curiosity as a gurney bearing the catatonic Stargher is wheeled FAST through the corridors by an FBI escort team.

58 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 58

Hundreds of photographs, drawings, diagrams, maps, blueprints, and documents--Novak's case material--cover every inch of wallspace. The table is littered with reference books, atlases, telephones, a fax machine, short-wave radio, and computer/Internet terminal. An FBI TECHNICIAN completes the electronics work and points out the "speed dial" functions to Novak and Ramsey.

FBI TECHNICIAN
(listing them)
Quantico. San Diego Field Office. San Diego, L.A. and San Francisco P.D. California, Arizona, Nevada State Police. Nine and ten are open lines.
(re the radio set-up)
Direct link to the chopper.
(re the computer)
That gets you into the Bureau database.

NOVAK
Thanks.

The Tech exits and Ramsey takes this moment "alone" to question his friend...

RAMSEY
I need to talk to you...
(skeptical)
You're sure you want to go through with this?

NOVAK
Looks like the only game in town to me. What do you want to do, Gordon? Go home?

Surprising himself, Ramsey answers honestly...

58 CONTINUED: 58

RAMSEY
Yeah, I do. I want to kiss my wife, mow the lawn, and get some sleep.

Novak laughs, but Ramsey persists...

RAMSEY
I'm not joking, Pete. Why jeopardize what we've already done? We caught Stargher. He can't hurt anybody else.
(re Catherine and the others)
You want to risk your career on this?

NOVAK
Look, if it burns us, I'll take the heat.

RAMSEY
(offended)
That's not what this is about. Jesus...
(with sensitivity)
Peter, the past is past. Let it go, man. For your sake and mine.

NOVAK
(all that matters)
Julia is still alive.

RAMSEY
And most likely, she's going to die.

Novak refuses to listen.

NOVAK
That can't happen. I won't let that happen.

Cooperman appears in the doorway and informs them...

COOPERMAN
They're ready.

Ramsey looks to his partner, but Novak is already on Cooperman's heels. Resignedly, Ramsey follows.

59 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - PREP ROOM - DAY 59

The catatonic Stargher lies on a movable table/cart, watched by a SECURITY GUARD. Miriam is present, checking her new patient's vital signs, as is Henry. He stands near free-standing PROCEDURE SUITS in various sizes (child, adult female, adult male) and observes Stargher with scientific detachment and human fear/fascination.

Cooperman escorts Ramsey and Novak to the prep room and the guard exits.

COOPERMAN
I'll be in my office if you need me.

RAMSEY
Thank you, sir.

Cooperman exits and Miriam tends to Stargher.

NOVAK
Where's Dr. Deane?

Henry motions at a DRESSING SCREEN, behind which a stripped-to-her-skivvies Catherine prepares for donning the procedure suit. She can glimpse Novak and tells him...

CATHERINE
It's Catherine, okay?
(a playful jibe at Miriam and Henry)
They get touchy about us lowly therapists calling ourselves "doctor."

MIRIAM
(equally playful)
As long as you know your place.

Miriam uses safety scissors to cut away Stargher's clothes and instantly notes the terrible scars. Curious about the EIGHT BANDAGES on his back, she asks...

MIRIAM
What happened here?

RAMSEY
We removed eight steel rings...

Miriam and Henry are compelled by the self-mutilation.

Forgetting the fact that she's half-undressed, Catherine steps beyond the screen to see the wounds and comments...

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: 59

CATHERINE
Should've left them in...
(guessing)
He used to suspend himself, didn't he?
Maybe in some kind of ritual...?

Ramsey and Novak exchange a look--*"Did you tell her?"*--and Catherine explains...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
They're comforted by the feeling of weightlessness. Like floating in water...

She becomes self-conscious and retreats behind the screen. Miriam redirects Novak and Ramsey's focus...

MIRIAM
(to the FBI)
I need to get him ready for the procedure... Henry, would you give our guests the ten-cent tour?

Henry's happy to show off (and get away from Stargher).

HENRY
Certainly...

Ramsey and Novak are reluctant to leave even a catatonic Stargher with Catherine and Miriam. Miriam picks up on it and shakes her head in disbelief...

MIRIAM
We'll be fine.
(get them out of here)
Henry?

Henry takes over...

HENRY
(re the prep room)
This is the staging area, where we keep the procedure suits...

Novak isn't sure what to make of the variety of suits, or their weird design, but allows Henry to continue...

HENRY (cont'd)
(re Miriam and Stargher)
And where we prep the patient.
(re the observation room)
The good stuff's in here...

59 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - DAY 59

They walk into observation room. Eager to show off his baby, Henry displays the computer console....

HENRY (cont'd)
Now this, gentlemen, is the catalyst...The one and only Neurological Cartography and Synaptic Transfer System.
(self impressed)
It not only maps the mind, it sends the information to a second party...

Professorially, he "sells" them his project..

HENRY (cont'd)
Let's say your thoughts could be stored on DVD. If somebody had the right kind of player, they could experience what you're thinking....
(sly)
Thing is, we can't record or store the data. It's like the early days of television.... The subject sends out a live feed and it's received during time of broadcast. All you have to do is "tune in".
(significantly)
But you do more than tune in....

PROCEDURE ROOM

INSIDE Catherine and Stargher are both in procedure suits lying on their pedestals as Miriam connects them to the suspension cables. It's a rather unsettling sight and the FBI men are a bit taken aback.

MIRIAM
(via intercom)
He's ready.

With a bit of a dramatic flourish, Henry presses a button and a SCREEN covering the observation window RISES, allowing them to see into the PROCEDURE ROOM.

HENRY
..You become part of the show....

Henry types in a command and Stargher is LIFTED off the pedestal. Novak and Ramsey are rather disturbed by the eerie similarity to what must have occured in Stargher's basement, but more unsettling to Novak is the sight of Catherine about to do the same.

(CONTINUED)

NOVAK
The suits they wear....They're strange.

HENRY
And expensive. The fabric -- if you want to call it that -- is a special polymer that comforms to the individual wearing it. Kind of a "one size fits all," so the sensors can press directly against the skin...Allowing the body to actually sense it's in another environment.

Ramsey focuses on the empty third bay/pedestal.

RAMSEY
Why are there three (stations)?

HENRY
For awhile, we tried joint therapy sessions -- "two shrinks for the price of one"--but Edward hated it. He'll only talk to Catherine. She has a "gift".

Eager to show off is baby, Henry displays the computer console....

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Miriam prepares CHEMICAL CARTRIDGES and loads them into a container connected to the IV like tubes and IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM, Ramsey comments....

RAMSEY
The pharmaceuticals, right?

HENRY
(nods)
If it weren't for Miriam's drugs, the mind would resist the entire process.

Once Catherine is situated, Miriam leans in close, so no one else can hear....

MIRIAM
It's not too late to stop.

Catherine shakes her head "no."

MIRIAM (cont'd)
You're sure?

CATHERINE
I'm sure.

Miriam smiles and touches Catherine's shoulder. She steps into the prep room and SEALS SHUT the door.

She joins the others in the OBSERVATION ROOM and Henry alters the lighting conditions.

HENRY
Response signal.

Catherine presses the bump on her hand. A RED INDICATOR LIGHT flashes on, then off.

HENRY (cont'd)
Functioning. We implanted a touch sensitive microchip in her hand. When she wants to end the session, or if it becomes too intense, she signals us to abort.

Henry types and Catherine is LIFTED off her table and soon, she hangs suspended from the ceiling, parallel to Stargher. From the ceiling TWO CLOTH LIKE MASKS descend and cover the faces of Catherine and Stargher.

AT THE CONSOLE, Novak is curious about something..

NOVAK
(to Henry)
You said she has a gift?

Henry and Miriam exchange a knowing look...

HENRY
(explains)
When we were ready for practical testing, Miriam and I "auditioned" some of the best child therapists in the country...

MIRIAM
...Each went through the procedure, but all they did was observe and report. Nothing more....

Various screens flicker to life, displaying the vital signs of both "feed" and "receive".

HENRY
Catherine had less experience, but she came so highly recommended, we figured, "What the hell? Let's give her a chance."

Miriam initiates the injection program and IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, we see chemcials mix with Catherine's blood.

HENRY (cont'd)
Immediately we knew she was different...

Henry gestures to the screen showing Catherine's "mind map".

HENRY (cont'd)
We found a highly evolved area in her cerebral cortex....

MIRIAM
Allowing her a tremendous capacity for empathy.
(admiringly)
Right from the start, she could feel what was happening. She understood. And the patient responded. Edward engaged her in dialogue, took her places, showed her things...He knew she cared.

A hopeful, solemn Novak gazes through the window, focusing on Catherine's face...

.. IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Catherine takes a deep breath and as the drugs take effect, feels herself losing consciousness. She glances at Stargher, a man who tortures and kills women, then looks up as the CLOTH MASK descends from the ceiling.

LIGHTS GO DOWN

Miriam (cont'd) (O.S.)
(back to business)
Intravenous administration complete.

HENRY (O.S.)
Initiating connection.

We follow fibrous wires running from Catherine's mask to Stargher's.. Their blood mixing with chemicals in the IV-like containers... The computer system humming...

HENRY (cont'd) (O.S.)
Transfer begins 1100 hours, 34 minutes, 12 seconds.

Catherine's eye focuses on the mask. As it comes closer, we see the lining is laced with thread-like wires and microchips forming hyper-miniature circuit boards..Catherine's eye blinks, then shuts. The mask covers her face..

FROM HER POV, the interior of the cloth pulses with ight. It's hypnotic, trance-inducing, and visually compelling...

Vision fades..Darkness.. A faint light... Microscopic veins in the eyelid becomes wires connected to the chips... and we're MOVING, into the circuitry...

ENTRANCE ONE

60 CONTINUED: 60

62 INTERCUT with this journey are sections of cloudy blackness and fragmented visions of CATHERINE connected to the apparatus, face masked, DESCENDING into this world... 62

63 There is an abrupt SHIFT from still images to regular motion and we find ourselves gliding over a tidepool filled with tiny fish and tadpoles... At water's edge, lying on rough, pebble-strewn ground, is a HAND... 63

Catherine's hand. We sense MOVEMENT, but she remains still. From the darkness comes a DOG. Black in color and featureless, it sniffs Catherine, dismisses her, and meanders into a cubicle opposite her, disappearing from view. After a moment of odd quiet, a DROP OF BLOOD hits the mask and we follow Catherine's hand as it moves to the cloth and removes it from her own face.

64 IN MACROSCOPIC SUPER SLOW-MOTION, another BLOOD DROPLET sails into the air and comes crashing down, hitting a RED ANT, catapulting it onto what looks like a tree, but is just a TWIG. As the insect scurries away, MORE DROPS pound the earth, splatter against "twig trees," and explode into pools of stagnant water... 64

65 As we begin to realize that this miniature landscape <u>is</u> the world into which Catherine descended... 65

She sits up, shivering, and breathes deeply, acclimating to her surroundings. The "floor" is covered with filth, ash, pebbles, and insects. Water is present in many forms; puddles, moisture, dripping ceilings. Eyes focusing, queasy, not fully "awake," Catherine notices the crimson stain on the cloth mask and the blood droplets showering the air... She turns and finds the source...

THE BLACK DOG stands in the opposite room next to a tub full of BLOOD, shaking himself dry after his "bath." Satisfied, the animal stops and trots away. Still adjusting to this nightmarish realm, Catherine at first doesn't hear it, but then realizes that somewhere, a child is CRYING. She looks around, then through a crack in the "floor," briefly catches sight of a BOY <u>beneath</u> her, on a level lower than hers... As he disappears into corridor ending in "nothing," we PULL BACK to show a MASSIVE LANDSCAPE of blocks, cubicles, crawlspaces, walls, stairs, and ladders. Leading everywhere and nowhere.

66 Catherine spots the boy as he crawls into a specific "room." Shortly after, a LIGHT comes on within the cubicle and she moves to it... We feel as though we're looking at a series of interlocked tenement rooms, some walls of which have been torn away to expose rooms within, rooms with no windows or doors... Following a path of fragile steps, Catherine makes her way to the LIGHTED ROOM and enters... 66

67 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - LIGHTED ROOM 67

A mottled HORSE stands with its head down, nose kissing the floor, allowing the BOY to caress its neck. This sweet animal is an incongruous vision in this hellish world and Catherine approaches with respect...

CATHERINE
Hello?

The frightened child retreats into a corner of the claustrophobic room, but the horse does not startle. Surprisingly--to the boy--the horse takes an affectionate step toward Catherine, inviting her to take over. Catherine allows the mare to smell her, then vigorously scratches along the mane and shoulder, much to the horse's delight.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Yeah, you like that, don't you?

She can see the boy hiding in the corner, stealing glances at her from the shadows.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Is your name Carl?

The boy--YOUNG STARGHER--is startled and intrigued by the question--*How did she know that?!*--but says nothing.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Another little boy I know, he has a horse, too...

The boy reacts to an unusual SOUND coming from the CEILING.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
His name's Edward. The boy, not the horse...

The boy takes a few steps toward her. He's interested in Catherine, but seems more concerned about something in the ceiling. Anxiously, he looks at the wall behind her and watches an old wind-up kitchen TIMER click down...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
What's the matter, Carl?

Again, a sharp SOUND from the ceiling.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
What's wro--?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 67

Young Stargher RUNS at her and SHOVES her hard! Catherine FALLS BACK just as SHEETS OF GLASS drop from the ceiling! Like oversize razor blades, they slice the horse into clean sections. They separate and compact until glass-containers of dissected horse stand within the room. Catherine SCREAMS, but the mare barely acknowledged what happened. Betraying no emotion, the boy runs... The shaken Catherine takes a moment to collect herself, then gives chase...

68 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - THE LABYRINTH 68

Young Stargher knows his way around the landscape, but Catherine has difficulty simply keeping him in sight... She runs, climbs, and crawls... Until she's utterly lost and disoriented. Tired and having difficulty breathing, she drops to her knees and "cools down." She hears a NOISE nearby, gets to her feet, and finds a GEARED MECHANISM connected to some kind of SHUTTERED DOOR composed of an almost metallic-looking glass. Curious yet cautious, she examines the nearby walls, floor, and ceiling for any signs of "traps" akin to the glass blades. Finding none, she pulls the mechanism and quickly steps back...

The shutter opens and Catherine knows there's something alive in the tiny cubicle beyond... She retreats into shadow, hiding... Released from the chamber is a WOMAN. As she moves out of darkness, we recognize her as ONE OF THE VICTIMS (now called VICTIM ONE). Ghostly pale and adorned in eerie fetish garb, she appears to "sense" the presence of a stranger, targets Catherine in the shadows, and ATTACKS!

Catherine's had enough and moves to press the implant... BUT VICTIM ONE IS ALREADY THERE! She brutally grabs Catherine, THROWS her against the wall and SMACKS her head against it. Catherine drops to the floor like a rag doll...

69 Victim One hefts Catherine onto her shoulder and with great 69
purpose, carries her deep into the labyrinth, toward the core... Passing in and out of consciousness, between darkness and light, a dazed Catherine is taken on a "tour" of Stargher's world... Passing mausoleum-like chambers filled with IMAGES of unspeakable horror and/or disturbing intensity... *At one of the rooms, we think we see Young Stargher silently observing...*

Sitting or standing in individual cubicles are STARGHER'S OTHER VICTIMS (TWO thru SEVEN), each woman resembling the grotesque porcelain dolls glimpsed in the cubbyholes in Stargher's basement. Dressed by a fetishistic sadist (Nine Inch Nails meets the Brides of Dracula), they resemble bored housewives, barely acknowledging the new member of the "harem."

70 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - THE CORE 70

VICTIM ONE drops Catherine in the center of the room and, job done, crawls away.

Groggy, feeling sick, Catherine sits up. Unbeknownst to her, she is sitting at the base of a pedestal with her back to a kind of THRONE... And someone is there. In the dim pool of light above the pedestal, we see a MAN rise from the throne. The wall behind him is covered in PURPLE CLOTH, and as he descends, we realize it is a CAPE connected to EIGHT METAL RINGS pierced through the flesh of his back. In a fluid motion, waves of purple give way to harshly textured concrete as the man reaches the floor... Catherine knows he is there. Unable to stop herself, she turns... And sees the terrifying face of STARGHER. But not the *same* Stargher:..

This is STARGHER KING.

STARGHER KING
(primitive, guttural)
Where you come from priddy thing?

In a split second, Catherine presses the hand sensor...

71 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 71

Apparently capable of staying awake if properly caffeinated, Novak sits cross-legged on the floor, shoes off, analyzing RECENT PHOTOS AND DOCUMENTS sent to him via courier. Ignoring a snoring Ramsey napping on a nearby cot, Novak looks at blow-ups from videos, blueprints of Stargher's house, detailed shots of the basement, and a draftsman's conceptual drawing of the cell itself...

HENRY (V.O.)
Gentlemen?

Novak looks at an INTERCOM SPEAKER.

HENRY (cont'd) (V.O.)
She's back.

Novak doesn't wait for his just-stirring partner and moves...

72 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY 72

As he enters, Novak moves to Henry who's checking a print-out of the procedure.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: 72

HENRY
She had quite a little trip...

Noting Novak's confusion, Henry points to a CENTRAL MONITOR resembling a futuristic V.U. meter, gradiated in sections of white, yellow, orange, and red.

HENRY (cont'd)
(re the white/yellow area)
If her neural activity stays within this range, I know she's self-cognitive.
(clarifies)
Like when you dream, but you know you're dreaming.

Novak nods, but his eyes are on Catherine, just coming back to consciousness, and Miriam in the PROCEDURE ROOM.

HENRY (cont'd)
(re the orange section and the print-out)
Sometimes she gets too involved and loses touch. Like the dreams you swear are real...

Novak gestures at the red section...

NOVAK
What happens here?

HENRY
That's... only theoretical...

NOVAK
What happens?

HENRY
If she came to believe that Stargher's world is her world... Her mind could convince her body that anything done to it is... Actually done. It's like that old wive's tale--If you die in your dream, you're really dead...

Novak doesn't like the sound of that.

72 CONTINUED: (2) 72

MIRIAM
Henry? Pump in two liters of pure oxygen, please.

Henry types a command and Novak speaks into the intercom.

NOVAK
Dr. Kent?

MIRIAM
Just a moment...

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Miriam eases Catherine back to consciousness and hands her the electronic note pad, but Catherine's hands are trembling and she's short of breath.

MIRIAM
(concerned)
Deep breaths.

CATHERINE
Is it cold in here...?

MIRIAM
No...

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM, Novak questions Henry...

NOVAK
Something wrong?

HENRY
She's supposed to document the experience as quickly as possible...

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Catherine looks pale and the shivering worsens. She writes her notes, but she's having difficulty concentrating...

MIRIAM
Catherine, you have to try...

No response.

72 CONTINUED: (3) 72

Catherine looks across the room and sees the mask being lifted from Stargher's face. Her hand trembles and the notepad falls to the floor. Miriam picks it up, checks to see it's still working, and is about to hand it back, but stops when she sees Catherine sitting up, cradling her knees, gently rocking herself.

MIRIAM
(concerned)
Catherine?

NOVAK
(via intercom)
If she could just talk to me...

Catherine vehemently shakes her head no.

MIRIAM
Not now, please. You'll have to give her some time alone...

Miriam presses a button and the PANEL LOWERS over the observation window, leaving Novak perturbed...

NOVAK
What happened?

HENRY
Be patient.

NOVAK
Patient?!

HENRY
(wants to help Julia Hickson)
I'll give you a bit of advice... If you want to learn anything from Catherine, treat her with respect and stay calm. She's very sensitive and if you push her too hard, she'll just shut down.

Extremely frustrated, Novak drops onto the observation area couch.

NOVAK
Give her some time alone...

Henry nods and checks his monitors. For Novak, being patient at a time like this is not going to be easy...

A73 OMIT

73 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - DAY 73

Novak searches the halls of the Campbell Center. He's about to ask the staff for help, but stops when he sees her through the window into Edward's room...

74 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY 74

Catherine sits next to the boy's bed, holding Edward's hand, softly singing a lullaby (to him, to herself). She's so troubled by her foray into Stargher's world, she barely reacts to Novak appearing in the doorway. Feeling that he must speak to her, Novak intervenes...

NOVAK
Not interrupting anything, am I?

Novak is about the last person she wants to see right now, and her look lets him know it, but he enters the room anyway.

NOVAK (cont'd)
From what I understand, he knows I'm here, isn't that right?

Novak sees something on the floor, picks up Edward's fallen teddy bear and rests it on the bed. Catherine appreciates the simple, genuinely tender gesture and senses a vulnerability in Novak as he looks at Edward's face...

NOVAK (cont'd)
I read about a woman in Texas who was in a coma for seven years. Every time her husband came to visit, her heart beat a little faster. I always thought that was something.
(coaxing a response)
Scientists have a name for that kind of thing?

Almost unconsciously, even though she has trouble verbalizing much of anything, she answers...

CATHERINE
It doesn't have much to do with science.

Seeing that the door has been cracked open slightly, Novak tries for more...

74 CONTINUED: 74

NOVAK
What then?

CATHERINE
It's the soul, the spirit, whatever you want to call it...

She gauges his reaction, waiting for a sarcastic comment, but there is none. In fact, Novak seems genuinely interested, nodding in agreement as if he understands...

NOVAK
Ah... The part of us that can't be explained.

Catherine scrutinizes him--his intensity, his complexity--and seeing an opening, Novak continues...

NOVAK
My friend Dr. Reid told me it's pretty unusual--schizophrenia in a kid this young...

Catherine nods.

CATHERINE
They usually think it's autism.
(comfortable, even proud about discussing this)
You have to understand that there's nothing wrong with his body. What's 'paralyzed' is part of his mind--the faculty that deliberately chooses or decides. It's so damaged by the virus, he can't even will himself to move.

NOVAK
Can you change something like that?

CATHERINE
If we're able to modify the way he thinks, yeah. We have to shake up his belief system until he accepts the idea that there's a way out. We'd still have to treat the illness, but he'd be here. Alert, alive...

Novak looks at Edward's expressionless face and naively wonders...

NOVAK
Even if you do that... I mean... What if he ends up like Stargher?

(CONTINUED)

Oops. Novak just touched a sensitive area and Catherine lets him know about it...

CATHERINE
Edward is nothing like Stargher and never will be. The virus doesn't turn people into murderers.
(teaching him)
Schizophrenics are generally passive, lonely, and vulnerable. They're terrified of any kind of violence. What drove Carl Stargher to kill is beyond my comprehension, maybe beyond anyone's... The only thing he shares with other schizophrenics is the feeling that...
(significantly)
The one place he feels safe is within his own mind.

Novak sees an opportunity to get an answer to a most important question...

NOVAK
If he feels so safe, maybe you'll find out about Julia...

Catherine looks at him intensely and asks...

CATHERINE
Do you feel there's a side of yourself you don't *show* people?

The question surprises Novak, but he's willing to play along. Anything to keep her talking...

NOVAK
Absolutely. I suppose everyone does.

CATHERINE
We all have secrets and fantasies. Things we don't share...

NOVAK
That's what therapists are for, right?

CATHERINE
During a session, when I'm inside... I see those things. I <u>feel</u> them. With Stargher I saw things I don't want to see again.

She begins to see and feel the experience and it's difficult for her...

74 CONTINUED: (3) 74

CATHERINE (cont'd)
See, he's not even Carl Stargher anymore. He's this... idealized version of himself. A king in a very twisted kingdom...

She has Novak's complete attention.

CATHERINE
A perfect place where he can indulge any desire. Every sick thought...

She senses something in herself which makes her uncomfortable--a part of her that is guiltily, darkly fascinated by such a place. She looks at Edward and tells Novak...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I don't want to talk in here. Not about this.

She rises, leaving Edward safe from such perverse notions...

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: (3) 74

CATHERINE (cont'd)
He's become this idealized version of himself that acts without fear. He faces no consequences, no punishment. He has no restrictions, no guilt. For him, it's a perfect world.

She senses something in Edward that makes her uncomfortable and tells Novak...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I don't want to talk in here... Not about this.

75 EXT. CAMPBELL CENTER - DAY 75

Catherine and Novak sit on a bench in the courtyard. Occasionally, Campbell Center workers or guests pass by.

CATHERINE
I don't know if I could do what you do. Devote myself to understanding a mind like Stargher's.

NOVAK
I'll never understand a mind like that...

CATHERINE
But you try. It's part of your job.

NOVAK
Yeah, I guess.

Catherine scrutinizes his face, his eyes...

CATHERINE
You don't like what you do, do you?

NOVAK
I like it better than my old job. I was an attorney, a prosecutor...

CATHERINE
So, why change?

Novak realizes she's waiting for him to tell her, that she's not going to let him off the hook. This isn't going to be easy for Novak, but here goes...

NOVAK
I had a case where a little girl was molested. Because of one tiny piece of tainted evidence, the guy who did it--Charles Gish--he walked. There was nothing I could do...

Novak sadly smiles...

NOVAK (cont'd)
Three days after his release, Margaret's parents--her name was Margaret Simms, the little girl... Her parents found Charlie sitting in their living room, watching TV, Margaret right next to him... He... He'd cut her right down the middle.

It doesn't take a lot of compassion to sense Novak's pain.

75. CONTINUED: 75.

NOVAK (cont'd)
They found her heart in the freezer. Charlie though the family should keep it. After that, I quit the D.A. and joined the FBI.. Figured all I'd have to do was catch them...

CATHERINE
... Until now.

Catherine gives Novak a moment, knowing that personal disclosure is not typical for him, then states...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I started to tell you Stargher wasn't really Stargher anymore...

Novak nods.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Well that's true and it's not...

As she relates the following, we sense in her a genuine interest in Stargher's psychological make-up...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
The dominant side is this horrible thing, but there's still a positive side that's...

NOVAK
A "positive" side?

CATHERINE
The way he sees himself as a child.

NOVAK
But that's him.

CATHERINE
There are different sides to every personality. Even the worst of us is capable of one decent act and vice versa. The "boy" Stargher made contact. He's curious about me...

NOVAK
You think you can do this, don't you?

CATHERINE
If I can reach the boy... He might tell me about Julia...

(CONTINUED)

75. CONTINUED: (2) 75.

Novak knows she's almost on the hook, but Catherine startles him with another question...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
What happened to Charles Gish?

NOVAK
He was institutionalized. Old Charlie beat the murder rap because he was "insane" when he killed Margaret. His attorney milked that jury for all they were worth. "Years of childhood sexual abuse drove Charlie to his deeds..." Such bullshit.

CATHERINE
Why is it bullshit?

NOVAK
I am convinced of one thing, Catherine. Charles Gish could've been raised by Ozzie and Harriet and the same thing would've happened.
(sees she doesn't accept that)
A kid can experience abuse a hundred times worse and grow up to be someone who would never, never hurt another living thing.

CATHERINE
You're sure of that?

NOVAK
Yes. I am.

And Catherine realizes that was a confession.

RAMSEY O.S.
Where the hell have you been?

They turn to see Ramsey approaching.

NOVAK
Right here.

RAMSEY
Next time, tell me.

NOVAK
But you looked so cute. All sleepy...

Ramsey shoots him a murderous look, then asks Catherine...

75. CONTINUED: (3) 75.

RAMSEY
Your colleagues want to know what to do with Stargher.

Novak looks to Catherine for the answer...

CATHERINE
Tell them to prep him. And that I'll be right there.

Ramsey nods and returns to the lab.

NOVAK
Thank you.

She smiles, but she certainly has her doubts about returning into Stargher's mind. There is no way she can suppress her fear... And then, an idea comes to her...

CATHERINE
Stargher has a dog, doesn't he?

NOVAK
An albino German Shepherd named Valentine... We're keeping him in a local shelter.

CATHERINE
Valentine...

76. OMIT 76.

77 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 77

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Catherine and Stargher lie on the pedestals, in their suits, waiting to start the second session. As Miriam makes adjustments to Stargher's mask, we see the albino German Shepherd Valentine between the stations, held on a leash by a FBI K-9 AGENT. As Valentine whimpers and licks his master's hand, Catherine smiles at the animal...

CATHERINE
You're a good boy, aren't you, Valentine?

As the dog is led to another part of the room, he barks at Catherine, as if asking for her help, then settles down on the floor where the K-9 agent secures his tether. As Miriam and the agent exit, we see Henry, Ramsey, and Novak watching through the window...

A78 IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM, a skeptical Ramsey inquires... A78

RAMSEY
This is supposed to help?

HENRY
On a subconscious level, anything that was special to Stargher, that gave him pleasure, should make him more peaceful and accessible.

Ramsey shoots a look at Novak...

RAMSEY
Peaceful?

But his colleague doesn't share his skepticism. In fact, Novak intensely watches with great expectation from one of the couches. At the console, Miriam joins Henry and they begin the process...

HENRY
Round Two.

A78

As the masks descend, LIGHTS FLICKER and Catherine's eyes shut. As we FADE TO BLACK...

HENRY (O.S.)
Uh-oh.

LIGHTS FLICKER. We hear an ELECTRICAL HUM rise and fall. Catherine opens her eyes and the LIGHTS blink on and off in a weird pattern, making it difficult to see clearly.

CATHERINE
Don't kid around, Henry...

Her suspension apparatus DESCENDS to the floor.

HENRY (O.S.)
I'm not. It's a power problem. I need you to check circuits six through twelve.

Catherine moves toward the electrical panel.

HENRY (cont'd) (O.S.)
Try to stay awake, okay?

CATHERINE
Yeah, yeah, yeah... I'm not sleepy...

78 78

As she moves toward the panel, everything becomes larger. By the time Catherine reaches the circuit breaker, it is the size of a garage door. *Curiouser and curiouser.*

She turns around to see the LABORATORY IS EMPTY and DEAD QUIET... And she sees *herself*--Catherine as small as a mouse trapped in a giant walled space...

79 AT THE CONSOLE, Novak, Miriam, and Henry observe the procedure room. And Catherine. Suspended in the apparatus. Motionless... 79

ENTRANCE TWO

80 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD 80

Catherine looks to see... Catherine lying in the fetal position, locked in a BOX made of thick clean glass. The electronic HUM becomes RHYTHMIC, AMBIENT NOISE... INSIDE THE BOX, staying calm, she searches for and finds a TRAP DOOR on the floor. She pushes out... The camera executes a complete 180 degree perspective change.

81 Catherine plummets. She tries to reach out, to stop her descent, but cannot. 81

Catherine falls through a dark CAVERNOUS ROOM resembling a mammoth hollowed-out rib cage. Below her is a DOME-LIKE STRUCTURE "growing" out of the floor, a HOLE in the center of its crest. Dozens of other such domes are visible in the murky hell-hole, but Catherine has no choice. She's dropping into this one...

82 Once she passes through the hole, INSIDE THE DOME, Catherine's body looks as though it's moving through water, *but there is no water...* Like an aerial artist, she reverses her position so she's "heads up." Standing, stable, on the floor. Sensing something with her... And *knows* it is... 82

CATHERINE
Valentine?

Out from the darkness, moving in normal motion, comes the white German Shepherd, but in the thick haze, his face is indistinct and ghostly.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Hi sweetie...

83 83

YOUNG STARGHER enters the bleak structure AS CATHERINE ENTERS FRAME. Seeing the invitation, she presses on...

84 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - BOYHOOD HOME - KITCHEN 84

Young Stargher is at the sink WASHING DISHES, an anxious eye on the clock.

CATHERINE
Need some help?

As Catherine enters the claustrophobic house, the boy hesitantly pushes a towel toward her, but doesn't look. She reaches the counter and starts to dry, much to Young Stargher's relief. As he washes, Catherine hands him a MIRROR LOCKET just like Edward's...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Carl I want to give you a present...

He's hypnotized by the thing, his eyes lighting up.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
If you need me, or if you feel that I'm around but can't find me... Just shine it, like this...

She shines reflected light onto the walls. Carl hands Catherine the wet plate and takes the locket. The dish slips from her fingers and SHATTERS on the floor. The boy's eyes fill with dread. The kitchen clock reads 5:30. He PUSHES Catherine toward a broom closet and shoves her inside.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
What's wrong, honey?

With a finger to his lips, he pockets the locket and shuts the door. FROM WITHIN THE CLOSET, she watches the terrified child through a CROCK in the door... IN THE KITCHEN, Young Stargher desperately tries to hide the broken plate. Startlingly, his father, MARTIN STARGHER, is already in the room. A cruel, imposing, manipulative man...

MARTIN
What did you do now? You make a mess? I hate a mess...

Young Stargher backs into a corner, fearing what will come...

MARTIN (cont'd)
Don't lie, now, Carl.

84 CONTINUED: 84

IN THE CLOSET, Catherine pushes, but the door won't budge. She POUNDS... IN THE KITCHEN, we hear no sound.

MARTIN (cont'd)
Remember what I said about liars? Liars will be punished...

85 INT. CLOSET 85

Catherine hears the STRANGE WOBBLING SOUND... But it comes from behind and she spins around...

86 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - LIVING ROOM 86

Young Stargher is forced to sit on the lap of an ugly MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN barely wearing a man's robe. On a nearby table are whisky, tumblers, and an ashtray filled with butts.

WOMAN
I got you a present, cutie-pie...

She gives him a TOY DOLL. Drunk, she hugs and kisses him. Embarrassed, the boy tries to squirm away.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Oh no. You're not going nowhere...

Martin enters and sneers at the boy...

MARTIN
Go back to bed, worm.

WOMAN
It's okay... We was just...

MARTIN
Shut up cunt.

The woman cowers, familiar with his violent moods. The boy hurries to his room, but Martin grabs him by the collar...

MARTIN (cont'd)
What is that?

He pulls the doll from the child's hands, turns to the woman, and SMACKS her across the face with it, gashing her cheek.

MARTIN
You give him nothing. Whore.
Are you his mother? ARE YOU?

Terrified, she shakes her head no. Martin sees Young Stargher quietly crawling away, hoping to escape...

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED: 86

Martin lifts the boy off the floor with one hand and holds him in front of the woman.

MARTIN (cont'd)
You see that? SEE IT? You slithered out one of them. But where is she now, Carl? As far from you as she could get, that's where.
(shoves him at the woman)
You want a mommy? Is that what you want?

The poor boy trembles with fear. And Martin notices a buddle of urine on the floor. He drops the boy and laughs...

MARTIN (cont'd)
Little worm pissed his pants...

Humiliated, Carl covers himself and hides in a corner. Martin and the woman LAUGH AND LAUGH, delighting in the boy's humiliation...

87 INT. CLOSET 87

Feeling the boy's shame, Catherine turns... And finds a FADED POSTCARD taped to the wall.

88 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - BEDROOM 88

Martin has discovered his son's secret hiding place--a camouflaged corner of the bedroom. Arranged in deliberate, artistic fashion are scavenged DOLLS. Heads, limbs, and torsos held together with twine, tape, and wire. Some wrapped in filthy plastic. Faded photographs (including one of his MOTHER), mementos, and most disturbingly, the feathers and bones of dead birds, insect carcasses, and dissected, desiccated mice. There's something peculiarly beautiful here, but Martin doesn't see it. Not at all...

MARTIN
Only girls play with dolls...
(disgusted)
What kind of thing are you?

89 INT. CLOSET 89

A WEIRD NOISE snaps Catherine back to "reality" and she finds herself in another room...

90 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - BATHROOM 90

A white German Shepherd PUPPY moves past her feet and pushes open the door, allowing her entry. The pup clicks across the tile floor and Catherine sees the adult Carl Stargher sitting on the edge of the bath tub, smoking a cigarette, his back to us. Puppy Valentine YIPS at Catherine as she steps in, then disappears into the hall, she again hears the WEIRD NOISE... She sees a STAINLESS STEEL BOWL wobble as Stargher's bloody rubber-gloved hands fill it with... *something*.

THE DOOR SHUTS and Catherine is startled. Stargher doesn't move. He knows she's there and isn't surprised by her presence, but he's not sure what to make of her... What to do with her... During their entire conversation, he remains in this position (sometimes glancing at her over his shoulder or her reflected face in the bathroom mirror). Finally, haltingly, he speaks...

STARGHER
She was the first.

Catherine cannot resist looking in the tub... The bloody, gutted corpse of a woman is briefly visible. Disgusted, she pulls back...

STARGHER (cont'd)
Didn't really know what I was doing...

She bumps into a stool and a bottle of rubbing alcohol spills to the floor.

STARGHER (cont'd)
What did you do now? You make a mess?

Catherine backs into a corner, fearing what will come...

STARGHER (cont'd)
I hate a mess.

But Stargher simply continues his "work" and asks with great curiosity...

STARGHER (cont'd)
Why are you here?

God almighty, what does she say?! What does she tell him?

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: (2) 90

SCRITCH-SCRITCH-SCRITCH. The puppy scratches and whimpers, but Stargher's not about to let him back in. Catherine cannot show fear, not now, and honestly tells him...

CATHERINE
I came to help you.

STARGHER
Liar. Bitch. Whore. Cunt.

Catherine decides to be bold. And issues a challenge.

CATHERINE
You sound like your father.

Silence. Time stands still. And with eerie calm, he responds...

STARGHER
That's not very nice.

Courageously, dangerously, Catherine takes one step forward.

CATHERINE
You learned a lot from him...

He says nothing. Does not move. A man of stone. And then, he acts as if listening to someone, carrying on a hushed conversation, then telling her...

STARGHER
He was nothing, he is nothing.

Catherine moves another step closer...

CATHERINE
Who told you to say that, Carl?

No answer.

CATHERINE
Do you remember the first time he talked to you? The first time you heard him? Were you swimming? Taking a bath, maybe? Was there water...?

STARGHER ABRUPTLY STANDS. Frightened, Catherine takes a step back, but he just stands there. Her question has shaken him, but has it been a positive or negative provocation? Her *fingers are ready to touch the sensor, just in case...* And then, in an almost childlike manner, he tells a story, at first haltingly, then intensely...

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED: (3) 90

STARGHER
Once upon a time, there was a little boy. And one day, his daddy took him to the river to be baptized. He didn't want to go, but daddy told him, "You behave, worm, and do this right. You need to be made clean."
(a vivid memory)
So the preacher took the boy from the daddy... He brought him to the river and held him under the water... The boy was so scared, his body started to shake and his eyes rolled back in his head... The preacher let go of him like he was on fire. That boy, he was drowning, but they all just stood there... Looking at him like he'd been taken by the devil himself.

Stargher smiles...

STARGHER (cont'd)
That's when me god came. Me god gave the boy strength to rise...
(grim humor)
The daddy... The daddy said the boy ruined him in the eyes of the Church. The daddy was "humiliated."
(changes tense)
That night, the daddy broke six of the boy's ribs and fractured his jaw. That little boy was just four years old...

Catherine waits, giving him time and space... She searches for the right thing to say and....

CATHERINE
Carl? What your father did to you is evil...

90 CONTINUED: (4) 90

Stargher removes the rubber gloves and tosses them into the tub.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
... What he did is wrong. He treated you like a *thing*...

Stargher looks at the girl in the tub.

STARGHER
Like I treated them?

Catherine carefully chooses her answer. And riskily states...

CATHERINE
No one should be treated that way.

STARGHER
Is that right? What world do you live in?

CATHERINE
(takes a huge chance)
Carl, where is Julia Hickson?

STARGHER
No. Name. No. Name...

He disappears into the darkness of a far corner.

91 OMIT 91

92 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 92

Henry sees a rapid rise in Catherine's warning meter...

HENRY
Miriam...

93 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - BATHROOM 93

Catherine pushes for an answer...

CATHERINE
Where is she?

No answer. Only a barely noticeable figure in the dark.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I know you, Carl. You want to tell me...

STARGHER
You know me.

Catherine has not time to realize her error.

STARGHER (cont'd)
You know who I am?

He emerges from shadow. And he is STARGHER KING.

STARGHER KING
Me me god. Now, you shud you mouth priddy thing, or me god slice you from the kunt to the tits.

Catherine moves to touch the sensor in her hand... He GRABS, LIFTS and SLAMS her onto the floor, the back of her head HITTING HARD. *Her vision blurs. Ears are ringing...*

STARGHER KING (cont'd)
Me god want you stay.

Stargher King straddles Catherine and pins her arms behind her back. *She's unable to touch the sensor...* With the tip of a TOOL he traces a line from her pelvis up the center of her suit...

93 CONTINUED: 93

STARGHER KING (cont'd)
Me god mek you beaudiful...

A COLLAR CLAMPS SHUT around Catherine's neck and...

She blacks out.

94 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 94

A SENSOR ALARM SOUNDS on the computer. Henry and Miriam express shock at the sight of the monitor peaking in the red and move to the "map" of Catherine's mind. As it becomes "cool," Stargher's becomes "hot."

HENRY
(worried)
That can't be right...

Miriam immediately moves to the screens displaying Catherine's VITAL SIGNS. What she sees greatly upsets her. She alters commands in the chemical-injection program, but Henry reports...

HENRY
No change.

Miriam moves to the MRI as a SEVERE WARNING ALARM SOUNDS! Concerned, Ramsey and Novak move to the monitoring station.

HENRY
(thinking fast)
What about emergency cessation? Gradually terminate the feed, disable the receptors...?

MIRIAM
It would cause massive shock...
(irritated by the alarm)
Shut it off!

VALENTINE BARKS! They turn to find the dog staring at Stargher's catatonic form, GROWLING and backing away from it... As if he sensed something horrible within. It unsettles everyone in the room. Anxious, feeling impotent and uninformed, Novak demands...

NOVAK
Talk to me.

HENRY
That hypothetical situation I told you about...? It's happening.

94 CONTINUED: 94

Miriam and Henry check various monitors, levels, etc. and continue to explain...

NOVAK
So stop it.

MIRIAM
It's not that simple...

NOVAK
When we got here, you did. Isn't that right? You made her stop...

MIRIAM
With Edward. This is different. Stargher's mind is unfamiliar territory, and she's lost.

HENRY
If she even knows she's lost...

Miriam fears that, too. Novak moves to the glass, eyes bonded to Catherine's form. And then... he focuses on the empty third station.

NOVAK
Well if she's lost, let's get her found.

He turns to Henry and Miriam... It takes them a moment, but both soon realize what Novak is suggesting...

95 INT. THE CELL - DAY 95

Fueling herself with candy and juice, Julia examines the cell for a way out, but finds tight seals everywhere. THE SHOWER ERUPTS WITH WATER! She counts until thirty. It stops. Shivering, Julia stares at the drain as water spirals down.

JULIA
(trying to remember the words)
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done...

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLASS, we watch her through one-way glass from the video camera's point-of-view. She looks right at "us," in the mirror, saddened by the dark circles under her bloodshot eyes.

JULIA (cont'd)
...On Earth as it is in heaven.

We drift to the right and see the l.e.d. counters CLICKING AWAY. 01:44:54, 01:44:53, 01:44:52... Less than two hours to live and she has no idea...

96 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 96

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Novak--wearing a procedure suit--lies on the third pedestal. He winces and squirms, getting used to the feel of the strange outfit...

NOVAK
Feels like I've got bugs crawling all over me...

MIRIAM
It gets worse.

As Miriam connects him to the IV and suspension cables, she shakes her head with disapproval...

MIRIAM
You're completely unprepared for this.

NOVAK
Dr. Kent? We've been over this.

MIRIAM
(wants to do this herself)
I know the process...

96 CONTINUED: 96

NOVAK
(looks at Catherine)
She knew the process, too. It didn't matter...
(looks at Stargher)
... You don't know *him*.

IN THE PREP ROOM, Ramsey watches with great worry...

RAMSEY
Jesus, Peter...
(to Henry)
Will he be all right?

HENRY
In theory, yes.

RAMSEY
In reality?

HENRY
Damned if I know.

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Miriam checks Novak's pulse, blood pressure, etc.

MIRIAM
(coaching him)
The first few minutes will be disorienting. Be patient and let the drugs do the work. If you can see, smell, and hear things... you're on the right track. Try to get a feel for Catherine. Sense her. Instinct plays a huge role in this, so trust it.

Novak's eyes move all around the room--Catherine, Stargher, the suit, the suspension wires... Everything is new and strange... Miriam INJECTS his hand with a MICROCHIP SENSOR. Novak presses it and the SIGNAL FLASHES.

96 CONTINUED: (2) 96

Miriam exits and seals shut the room. Novak is LIFTED, the suspension device clicks into place and the MASK descends...

MIRIAM
(via intercom)
No matter what happens, Peter, remember one thing... It's not real.

Novak's eyes fix on the clear liquid contained in the IV-like cylinder. A cloud of his blood grows within, preparing the mixture for injection...

97 The viscosity of the fluid starts to thicken and the CAMERA MOVES INTO THE MIXTURE. As blood and chemical swirls take shape we MOVE FAST... Deeper into the fluid at the molecular level... We feel like we're SOARING over some kind of liquid landscape... 97

98 ...NOVAK HYPERVENTILATES. He's having difficulty making the transition... 98

98 CONTINUED: 98

...Flying, faster, faster... Through an entire universe...

99 ...Novak is in the procedure room. Alone. His face contorted as if feeling the effects of tremendous g-force... 99

100 More psychotropic drugs are injected into the cylinder. The viscosity of the clear liquid is thicker than before and the new drugs form phlegm-like clusters... CAMERA MOVES DEEPER INSIDE... The clusters form constantly-changing weird shapes, then become still. And we realize... They are clouds... 100

ENTRANCE THREE

101 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD 101

Clouds hover above a dark, gloomy landscape dotted with hills. THREE IDENTICAL WOMEN sit on black earth, their bodies positioned in a uniform pattern. PULL BACK TO REVEAL NOVAK at their feet, in a kneeling fetal position, face down in the gritty soil, a piece of cloth draped over his head. With difficulty, practically inhaling black grit, Novak breathes deeply and rises to his knees. His hand moves to his face and he's astonished by the texture of the gravel, the sharpness of it against his face... Removing the shroud-like cloth, he looks at the soil, smells it, tastes it...

MOTHER ONE (O.S.)
Have you seen him?

Novak find the first of the three--VISIONS OF STARGHER'S MOTHER--addressing him. She, like the other two, speaks in a ghostly monotone, nearly devoid of emotion...

MOTHER ONE (cont'd)
My boy... My little one. His father took him from me. Have you seen him...?

As she continues, almost mantra-like, MOTHER TWO begins...

MOTHER TWO
So I spit him out my hole... Big deal. Don't mean I gotta take care of him...

The women's repetitive "monologues" overlap, aural layers now added by THREE...

MOTHER THREE
My child is an abomination... He is damned... He has no soul...

101 CONTINUED: 101

Novak takes a moment to absorb his surroundings... The sights, sounds, and <u>feel</u> of the place.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: (2) 101

Like being within a dream... As he backs away from the odd trio, SHIMMERING LIGHT dances across his face. Shading his eyes, Novak searches for the source.

102 Opposite him, across a valley, is a SHEER ROCK WALL. A massive cliff face pockmarked with rough "windows." Like a star, the LIGHT sparkles inside one of them, a fragment of MIRROR reflecting a beam away from Novak's face to a PATH cutting across the valley floor to the base of the wall... 102

The light guiding him, Novak starts to CLIMB, pulling himself up crevices, finding stairs or ladders, passing deep, seemingly infinite passages... Like tombs, or the "drawers" of a mausoleum. Deep within one of them, the LIGHT FLICKERS... Fades... And Novak crawls into darkness...

103 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - THE DEN 103

Novak emerges in a cavernous room dripping with decadence. The place reeks of sex, pain, lust, and cruelty. As he moves deeper into the chamber, Novak sees YOUNG STARGHER perched atop some kind of pedestal, crouching, fingering his mirror LOCKET, bouncing sparkles of light into the dark corners of the room. Behind him is a monolith-like slab barely illuminated by some kind of overhead light.

The FLICKERING LIGHT pinpoints a FIGURE emerging from the darkness... It is Catherine. Altered into an image of Stargher's victims. Her skin, face, clothing, eyes, are just like the Victims'. It's a shocking, strange image, made even more disturbing by the look of *pleasure* on her face... Novak is staggered by the sight.

NOVAK
Catherine...?

She exhibits no recognition of her name. Like an ethereal queen of the damned, she strides toward him, narrowing her eyes... Novak's vision and hearing become affected, then focus to clarify as he reminds himself...

NOVAK (cont'd)
This isn't real...

Catherine seductively moves closer to Novak, their bodies almost touching, her hands caressing his hair, lips, neck...

NOVAK (cont'd)
Jesus... Catherine... Listen to me...

103 CONTINUED: 103

She presses her finger to his lips and forces him down, onto the floor, his back to the pedestal. Catherine straddles Novak, and when he tries to stand, she holds him down, forcing him to stay...

NOVAK (cont'd)
LISTEN TO ME!

She steals a glance over his shoulder and glimpses a MALE FIGURE coming toward them, coming into the light... Novak is utterly unaware of what's happening... Catherine is keeping him occupied. Waiting for the arrival of...

STARGHER KING.

Novak catches only a fleeting glimpse of the monster before Stargher King GRABS him by the throat and SMASHES his head against the pedestal.

BLACKOUT.

FADE IN:

104 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - THE DEN 104

Eyelids rise and flutter. Novak regains consciousness and tries to sit up, but his wrists and ankles are bound to a cold stone surface by leathery cords. He is strapped to the the pedestal, face up, spread-eagle. Again, his vision and hearing become blurred... When they become focused, he sees, standing over him, in a pool of light, Stargher King.

Wearing what could be seen as CEREMONIAL GARB, a silent, solemn Stargher King prepares himself for a ritual by polishing and arranging an assortment of shiny, sharp, macabre TOOLS.

NOVAK (cont'd)
Stargher...

Stargher King doesn't react, deep in concentration as the ritual preparation proceeds...

NOVAK (cont'd)
Carl Stargher... You, motherfucker! I'M TALKING TO YOU!

Stargher King lifts a KNIFE and holds its glistening blade up to the light. Novak contemplates pressing the sensor in his hand... But stops when he sees Catherine emerge from shadow and stand at Stargher King's side.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: 104

NOVAK (cont'd)
Catherine...!

No reaction from her. Only keen interest in what Stargher King is preparing.

NOVAK (cont'd)
For god's sake, LISTEN TO ME!

Stargher King lifts the KNIFE.

NOVAK (cont'd)
Your name is Catherine Deane...

So far, Catherine looks at Novak like he's speaking gibberish... Novak shuts his eyes, desperately trying to remember things...

NOVAK (cont'd)
COME ON, CATHERINE. REMEMBER.

Catherine assists Stargher King as he approaches the pedestal with the knife. Novak makes sure he has eye contact with her...

NOVAK (cont'd)
Henry, Miriam... Edward! You know Edward...

Is there a change in Catherine's expression?

NOVAK (cont'd)
You don't belong here, Catherine.

104 CONTINUED: (2) 104

Stargher King SLICES through Novak's clothes, exposing the flesh of his abdomen.

NOVAK (cont'd)
(spitting at Stargher King)
FUCK YOU, ASSHOLE!

Stargher King grabs Novak by the throat and traces the blade down the center of Novak's torso.

NOVAK (cont'd)
This is not real.

Stargher King releases Novak's neck and exchanges blade for NEEDLE. Novak desperately pleads with Catherine...

NOVAK (cont'd)
(urgently)
It's me, Catherine--Peter Novak. I work for the FBI. I need you to help me, remember?
(sees Stargher King approaching)
CATHERINE! REMEM--

Stargher King INSERTS the needle into the flesh of Novak's abdomen. NOVAK SCREAMS! *This fucking HURTS!* Stargher King wiggles the needle deep into the stomach area, pulls it out, and digs his finger into the wound. NOVAK CRIES IN PAIN! And whimpers almost silently to himself...

NOVAK (cont'd)
Fucking feels real...

As Stargher King continues the torture, the intensity of Novak's CRIES OF AGONY hit Catherine like a thunderbolt. There's a glimmer of life, of recognition in her eyes...

STARGHER KING
Me god gut you like a deer.

Although we don't see it, we HEAR something awful... *Like Stargher King fishing around inside the wound...*

NOVAK
(barely audible)
Julia Hickson, Catherine...
(in agony)
Oh god, help me...

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: (3) 104

A pale, sweating Novak tries to stay conscious... He will not go into shock...

NOVAK
Not real... Not real... Not real...

A FEMALE HAND grabs a tool from the tray...

STARGHER KING
(mimicking Novak, laughing)
Nod reel, nod reel, nod reel...

STARGHER KING IS SLAMMED FROM BEHIND! CATHERINE RAMS THE TOOL THROUGH HIS SHOULDER! As Stargher King stumbles away, gagging, blood pouring, we see that she has returned to normal. The "bride" persona is gone.

STARGHER KING (cont'd)
Me god kill you all...

As Stargher King emits animalistic growls, Catherine CUTS Novak's bonds and helps him sit up...

CATHERINE
Nothing happened to you, Peter. Nothing.

Novak looks down at his abdomen and finds himself intact--clothes, flesh, everything. When he looks up, he and Catherine realize they are now in a DIFFERENT ROOM...

105 INT. STARGHER'S WORLD - THE IDEALIZED CELL 105

Novak is still having trouble adjusting to the shift and although the wounds are gone, he can still *feel* the pain...

CATHERINE
Breathe. Breathe deep...

NOVAK
What happened?
(nervously looks around)
Where the fuck are we...?

A FLICKER OF LIGHT dances across Catherine's face.... And Novak now sees Young Stargher is with them.

CATHERINE
(explains to Novak)
He brought me here...

105 CONTINUED: 105

NOVAK
(distrustful of the boy)
But that's him, right?

Young Stargher runs to a corner. The FLICKER OF LIGHT continues down a stone path, leading them out of darkness...

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: (2) 105

CATHERINE
Carl...
(a realization)
Oh god... Is this it, Carl?

NOVAK
Is this *what*?

CATHERINE
Where he keeps Julia...

Catherine and Novak step into the light and see...

106 The cell. But it's more stylized than the actual cell. It's bigger and ornately decorated, with the atmosphere of a church. Individual IMAGES appear in SHRINES, each showing Julia Hickson from different angles. Central to the room is a WINDOW INTO THE CELL ITSELF... Where we find a beautiful, mermaid-like JULIA HICKSON floating in water... Peaceful, joyous... 106

Catherine holds the hand of Young Stargher as Novak stands stunned at the sight of "Julia." The child looks at Catherine with beatific, sad eyes, regarding her as one would a saviour...

NOVAK
Jesus Christ...
(forceful, to the boy)
Where is this? TELL ME!

Frightened, Young Stargher breaks away and runs to a corner. Catherine gestures for Novak to stay back and she calmly approaches the child... He so desperately wants her affection, but fear prevents him from reaching out to her.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Don't be scared. You're my friend and I would never hurt you.

She extends her hand... Oh-so-hesitantly he takes it.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
This is Peter. He's a friend, too.

Novak pays them little attention. He's too busy examining the idealized cell for any clues to its whereabouts in the real world.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: 106

With sensitivity, Catherine appeals to the boy...

CATHERINE
Carl, do you know where we are? Like on a map?

Young Stargher shakes his head "no" and buries his face in her shoulder.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
It's okay, it's okay... I'm proud of you. You're very brave.

Novak finds something affixed to the base of the cell...

106 CONTINUED: (2) 106

Catherine comforts the boy and looks deeply into his sad, haunted eyes.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Carl, I think I can help you. Would you like that?

He nods.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Even if Peter doesn't find Julia, I want to help you...

The boy leans against her and she caresses his face.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I promise.

Novak moves closer... Mounted beneath the glass is a shiny, perfect metal plaque with a logo. Novak recognizes it from the hoist in Stargher's basement.

NOVAK
CATHERINE!

As he runs to her, she looks up...

NOVAK (cont'd)
I've got it. I know how to find her...

Novak grabs her hand and pulls her to her feet. Angrily, she pulls free...

CATHERINE
What are you doing?!

NOVAK
Taking you back.

Feeling betrayed and rejected, the child breaks away from her,

CATHERINE
CARL!

NOVAK
Forget him.

As Young Stargher flees, we notice a spot of BLOOD seeping through his shirt in exactly the same place in which Catherine wounded Stargher King.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: (3) 106

CATHERINE
LET GO OF ME!

THE ROAR OF STARGHER KING shakes the cell. Terrified, the boy freezes.

CATHERINE
I can't just leave him...

STARGHER KING APPEARS! His shoulder a wounded, bloody mess, he descends out of dark nothingness, HOWLING with rage. He GRABS Young Stargher and CLAMPS HIS MASSIVE ARMS AROUND THE CHILD!

STARGHER KING
Liddle worm been a bad boy...

Young Stargher opens his mouth in a silent scream... Catherine's arms reach out to him, but Novak clasps her hand and presses... *And she is haunted by the sight of a frightened child in the arms of a monster...*

107 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 107

Henry notices significant activity on the monitors...

107 CONTINUED: 107

HENRY
They're back...!

Everything happens fast. He and Miriam frantically cease the procedure. Novak and Catherine are lowered and Novak startles them by quickly regaining consciousness. Miriam tries to follow protocol, but Novak is moving like a fish caught in a net. Miriam enters the PROCEDURE ROOM and injects him with stabilizing drugs.

MIRIAM
Peter. Calm down.

He doesn't listen to her. Instead, he does everything he can to free himself from the apparatus.

NOVAK
(hoarse, groggy)
Help me...

Miriam is forced to do so.

NOVAK
(re Catherine)
She all right?

MIRIAM
Yes. I think so...

That's all he needed to hear.

NOVAK
Then get me out of this fucking thing.

A107 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY A107

Led by Cole, a team of FBI AGENTS has cordoned off Stargher's house in order to gather and record forensic evidence. A cell phone rings and Cole answers...

COLE
Agent Cole here...

108 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 108

Although he is fighting off drug side effects and mental/physical fatigue, Novak dresses and barks into a speakerphone...

NOVAK
Cole? It's Novak.

A confused, concerned Ramsey enters and observes.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: 108

NOVAK (cont'd)
I need you to get down to the basement... Stargher's workshop...

COLE
They haven't finished the grid yet...

NOVAK (cont'd)
Fuck the grid. Just get down there.

Before Cole can ask anything, Novak hangs up. Like a man possessed, he searches for specific items in his arsenal of evidence.

RAMSEY
(worried, irritated)
Whoa. Peter? Take a deep goddamn breath and tell me *what the fuck* is going on...

108 CONTINUED: (2) 108

Novak gathers some maps, puts on his gun, and finds a PHOTOGRAPH of the HOIST Stargher used to suspend himself above the victims. Just like Ramsey asked, Novak takes that deep breath... And tells him...

NOVAK
Gordon? I saw her.

RAMSEY
Who?

NOVAK
Julia. And I know how to find her.

Ramsey looks at Novak like he's lost his mind.

RAMSEY
Hold on. You might've seen Jimmy Hoffa dancing with Timothy Leary, that doesn't mean shit.

NOVAK
I saw her.

RAMSEY
You're scaring me, Pete...

The PHONE RINGS and Novak answers, again on speakerphone.

NOVAK
Cole?

109 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY 109

A WOODEN GRID is being constructed about a foot above the basement floor. It's used to protect evidence during extensive forensic evaluation but Cole moves past it to the floor itself, shining a FLASHLIGHT at the stainless steel table.

COLE
Yeah. Now what am I doing here?

A110 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY A110

Dizziness and disorientation again hit Novak. Pale and sweating, he winces as his stomach agonizingly cramps. Concerned, Ramsey moves to help him, but Novak waves him off. He gets his breath, fights the pain, and tells Cole...

NOVAK
The machine Stargher used... The hoist...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

A110 CONTINUED: A110

NOVAK (cont'd)
There's a kind of plaque, a metal plate, with a logo... on the base...

B110 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY B110

Cole wipes clean the plate and reads...

COLE
Carver Industrial Equipment.
Bakersfield.

110 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 110

Novak instructs him...

NOVAK
I need the history of that machine. Who bought it, who used it, who sold it. Check Stargher's pay stubs. I want to know every contractor he worked for. I'm calling from the chopper in twenty and I want it all.

Before Cole can protest or inquire, Novak is off the phone and on the move.

RAMSEY
Stop. Now. You tell me what you're doing.

Novak is out the door and a pissed-off Ramsey follows...

111 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 111

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Miriam checks Catherine's recovery...

CATHERINE
...A pocketful of rye.

MIRIAM
Four and twenty blackbirds...

CATHERINE
Baked in a pie.

Miriam touches Catherine's face and smiles.

MIRIAM
Thank god.

She looks at Stargher and calls to Henry...

MIRIAM (cont'd)
Henry, call Agent Ramsey.
(re Stargher)
I want him out of here.

AT THE CONSOLE, on a security monitor, Henry can see Novak and Ramsey exiting down the corridor...

HENRY
The FBI has left the building.

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Miriam appears concerned...

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED: 111

MIRIAM
Damn.
(as a doctor, concerned)
I didn't get a chance to clear Agent Novak...

Catherine encourages her...

111 CONTINUED: (2) 111

CATHERINE
(groggy, but okay)
Go. I'm fine. Go.

Miriam is torn, but hurries to catch Novak, telling Henry as she leaves...

MIRIAM
Keep an eye on her, Henry.

He nods, but isn't really paying attention. Catherine turns to Stargher's motionless form, still suspended, still connected to the machinery.

112 INT. THE CELL - DAY 112

JULIA
Do something, Julia.

She looks around the room and runs her hands along the walls, the tile, looking for a weak spot. She focuses on the CEILING PANEL and although it's painful because of swollen fingers, removes her ENGAGEMENT RING...

113 EXT. CAMPBELL CENTER - DAY 113

A ready-and-waiting HELICOPTER is on the PAD. Novak races out of the Center, Ramsey right behind him. He grabs Novak by the shoulder...

RAMSEY
Listen, as your friend, I've got to ask you one thing... What if these people fucked with your head? What if this is all some kind of trick you are playing on you?

If Novak considered the possibility, he might shatter right here and now. And Ramsey knows it. Sensitive to his friend, he tells Novak...

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Go. I'll take care of things here.

Ramsey can see Novak hesitating...

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Go.

Novak climbs into the helicopter and buckles himself in. Ramsey pats the side of the chopper and signals the pilot to take off...

114 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 114

Henry analyzes voluminous print-outs from the last procedure. Although his eyes are on the data, he converses with Catherine in the PROCEDURE ROOM via intercom...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HENRY
...There was a moment when we thought we'd lost Agent Novak as well...

We see chemicals flow and computer programs initiate the procedure, but Henry is oblivious.

HENRY (cont'd)
His recovery was rather quick, don't you think?

He JUMPS when the door to the procedure room SEALS SHUT and mechanisms HUM.

HENRY (cont'd)
Catherine?

When he looks through the window, Catherine is again suspended, the procedure underway.

HENRY (cont'd)
What do you think you're doing?

He types in a command, but nothing happens. He tries again, and on another keyboard, but gets no response. When he looks at the "map" screens, he sees something odd. It's a small change, but it makes all the difference in the world...

A115 INT. HELICOPTER - DAY A115

As the chopper zips over the Grapevine toward the farms of the Central Valley, Novak communicates with Cole...

B115 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY (INTERCUT WITH HELICOPTER) B115

COLE
The hoist was manufactured by Carver Industrial Equipment in 1982. Serial number 117-337J. Purchased by an auto shop in '92, but sold to Lattimer Farms in August of '95.

NOVAK
Then what?

COLE
Shit if I know. Lattimer retired this year...

Novak shuts his eyes, hoping for the best, praying that trusting his instincts was a wise move.

115 INT. THE CELL - DAY 115

Like a rock climber in a crevasse, Julia shimmies up the walls of the cell by bracing herself in a corner and using her hands and feet to push up. The tile is slippery and each movement precarious. She uses strength and balance to reach a position just below the Plexiglas, the fluorescent light bathing her in an eerie intense glow. She sees a gap between the glass and the wall and uses her ENGAGEMENT RING to dig into ti, SCRAPE, SCRAPE, SCRAPING with the diamond...

THE SHOWER SPRAYS WATER! Julia nearly loses her balance, but manages to stay pressed into the corner. She kicks the shower head, sending the spray as far from her as possible, and continues to dig at the caulking around the light fixture...

IN THE OBSERVATION ROOM, we see something unexpected... The clock reads 00:00:00. *That water isn't going to stop.*

116 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 116

HENRY
Have you considered the consequences of your actions?
(waits)
You're seriously endangering your career, this project, and my computer.
(waits)
Catherine?

Miriam returns to the lab to find Henry, talking to Catherine via intercom, anxiously observing from the console.

MIRIAM
What's she doing?

HENRY
You know what she's doing...

Miriam analyzes the various screens and regretfully, angrily, worriedly realizes what's happened...

MIRIAM
Stupid, stupid girl.

HENRY
Exactly.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: 116

Miriam moves to the door, but Henry tells her...

HENRY (cont'd)
You can't get in. She changed the codes.

From the corridor come Agent Ramsey and a three-person FBI MEDICAL/TRANSPORT TEAM. Henry and Miriam don't know what to tell him.

RAMSEY
(sensing their worry)
What happened?

IN THE PROCEDURE ROOM, Catherine finishes making all necessary connections and preparations. She sees the angry, confused people watching her, but pays them no heed. Her eyes focus on a POSTCARD she's taped to the wall--an image of a GODDESS/WARRIOR.

AT THE MONITORING STATION, Henry explains to a confused, irritated Ramsey...

HENRY
She reversed the feed...

RAMSEY
And what does that mean?

HENRY
Instead of going into his mind...

MIRIAM
She's brining Stargher into hers.

And together, they can do nothing but watch as the procedure begins...

ENTRANCE FOUR

117 INT. CATHERINE'S WORLD 117

BRIGHT SHIMMERING LIGHT fills the screen. Its source is within a beautiful TEMPLE, a place of peace and tranquility. Before the structure is a POOL and opposite it is a FOREST of vibrant blossoming trees. It is here where the light is directed...

We follow it as it dances from tree to tree until it finds its target - the face of Young Stargher. For him, arriving in Catherine's world is like Dorothy landing in Oz.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: 117

CATHERINE
It's all right, Carl... You can come out now.

Emerging from the temple is Catherine, now resembling the warrior-goddess of the postcard come to life...

Bedecked in unusual shimmering armor, eyes bright, skin glowing, hair waiving in the wind, Catherine touches the MIRROR LOCKET around her neck and snaps it shut.

117 CONTINUED: (2) 117

She opens her arms and the boy moves to her, basking in the comfort of her embrace. Security and a sense of wonder overcome any fear in the child.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
It's okay. You're safe here...

She looks deeply into his eyes and reassuringly explains...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I promised I would help you, and I always keep my promises.
(smiles)
Do you know why I brought you here?

He shakes his head no.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
I wanted to tell you that I'm going to make sure you can come visit me any time you want...

His sad eyes look deeply into hers...

YOUNG STARGHER
Can...

Catherine is astonished and relieved to hear him speak. A soft, trembling little voice asks...

YOUNG STARGHER (cont'd)
Can I stay here? With you?

She is touched. And strokes his face.

CATHERINE
Oh... No, honey, I'm sorry. It doesn't work that way.

Hurt, the boy turns away from her, trying not to cry. She gently takes his hand but he yanks it free.

CATHERINE (cont'd)
There's nothing I can do...

STARGHER
Yes there is...

When Catherine looks up, Young Stargher is gone. Sitting in his stead is ADULT CARL STARGHER. Considering what happened the last time she talked to him, Catherine is on edge, but she senses no immediate threat and treats him with cautious compassion.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: (3) 117

(When she talks to Carl, we're not sure whom we will see - man or boy - but each uses the same mannerisms and childlike speech).

CATHERINE
(as if still talking to the boy)
What do you mean, Carl?

He begins to rock back and forth, relaying to her a simple story...

STARGHER/YOUNG STARGHER
One day, outside our house, I saw a sparrow with a broken wing. I wanted to fix him and make him better, so I hid him with my secret things. My father found out, but he didn't know where to look. He hit me and hit me and hit me, but I wouldn't tell. Then he said, he said, "I'll find that dirty thing, Carl, and when I do, I'm going to shove it down your throat."
(calm, lucid)
I tried to make my bird fly away, but he was still too hurt... I knew my father would find him. It was just a matter of time. So I took my bird to the sink and held him under the water. Don't you see? It was better for him that way. I saved him...

Catherine realizes what she's being asked to do and tears well up in her eyes...

CATHERINE
I can't do that, Carl. I won't...

STARGHER
Do you know what it's like for me back there? The things I've seen? What he does to them? To *me*?

CATHERINE
(breaking down)
Don't ask me to do this, Carl, please...

A STRANGE NOISE fills the area...

117 CONTINUED: (4) 117

YOUNG STARGHER
It doesn't matter... He found me. He always finds me.

Young Stargher moves away from her. CENTIPEDES crawl over Catherine's legs and through her hair. She stands and brushes them off. A SNAKE slithers through the pool. The atmosphere grows darker and ominous...

STARGHER KING RISES FROM THE POOL like a human serpent. The brilliant colors of Catherine's world fade to grim tones. she and the boy back up into the shelter of the temple. Stargher King seethes with anger and confusion...

STARGHER KING
WHERE THISS AT??!! Me god no like id here...

He snarls when he sees Catherine...

STARGHER KING (cont'd)
You. You big trubble-mekker... Worst bitch-whore-cunt of all...

STARGHER ATTACKS! SNARLING! Catherine raises a CROSSBOW and FIRES! A glistening silver arrow PIERCES the foot of Stargher King bolting him to the earth. BLOOD SPRAYS!

117 CONTINUED: (5) 117

As Stargher King angrily, futilely tugs at his bleeding foot, we see a ferocity grow within Catherine...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Welcome to my world.

She violently approaches, grabs his hair and pulls his face into her bent knee, breaking his nose. CRUNCH. Blood flows down the lower half of his face. She KICKS, sending him onto his back. Stargher King huffs and puffs, startled by the intensity of the pain. CATHERINE SHOOTS! And the SECOND ARROW rips through his upper arm and into the earth, pinning him. Catherine looks into his soulless eyes...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
My world... My rules.

A118 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY A118

As Stargher's body lies in the apparatus, Miriam and Henry note disturbing changes in his vital signs...

B118 INT. CATHERINE'S WORLD B118

As Catherine readies the crossbow for another shot, STARGHER KING SWIPES at it with his free hand. The power of the gesture sends the weapon flying.

STARGHER KING
You thing you can stop me god?

He pulls at his foot, flesh and tendon RIPPING...

STARGHER KING
Me god damn you.

He reaches for the arrow in his shoulder and starts to pull... CATHERINE KICKS him in the face, pounces, and straddles Stargher King. She pulls a SWORD from a scabbard and raises it high over his chest...

YOUNG STARGHER O.S.
No!

YOUNG STARGHER steps away from his hiding place. BLOOD seeps through the boy's shirt at the wrist and shoulder. A puddle of crimson forms around his shoe and trickle of red runs from his nose...

YOUNG STARGHER
He didn't mean it.

B118 CONTINUED: B118

The sight mortifies Catherine, freezing her with dread. *What has she done!?*

STARGHER KING
(laughing)
Me god boy, boy me god.

Catherine's vision blurs and the sound distorts... The boy is terrified and confused. When next Catherine looks, she sees ADULT CARL STARGHER beneath her.

STARGHER
Don't stop now, Catherine, please... DO IT.

THE ATMOSPHERE GROWS DARKER THAN EVER BEFORE. When she looks again, she see the bloody, horrific, grinning visage of STARGHER KING.

B118 CONTINUED: (2) B118

STARGHER KING (cont'd)
Me god boy. Boy me god.

YOUNG STARGHER
(blankly, sad)
Me god boy. Boy me god.

Catherine knows what must be done... Fighting back tears, she shuts her eyes and DRIVES the sword into the heart of Stargher King. He ROARS with torment and the boy collapses. As Stargher King writhes dying, Catherine backs away, kneels, and lifts the boy's body to her breast. As his life fades, she smooths his hair and they share a sad smile... Catherine carries his body into the pool and holds it beneath the water... Until she knows he is gone.

As the vertical line of the sword in Stargher King's chest becomes the vertical line(s) of...

118 INT. CAMPBELL CENTER - LABORATORY - DAY 118

...The suspension wires of the procedure apparatus, from which hangs Stargher's body. ELECTRONIC ALARMS sound on the monitors, alerting us to his rapid decline. Catherine quietly returns to consciousness and is automatically lowered to the floor. She pulls the mask from her sad face and...

STARGHER'S BODY SPASMS! His head jerks and his face pulls away from the mask... And for a brief, fleeting moment, Carl Stargher is <u>conscious</u>.

Catherine is frozen with shock. As Stargher's eyes find hers, he cries an agonized, silent, tortured scream... And dies.

A FLAT LINE WARNING SOUNDS on Stargher's heart monitor. IN THE CONTROL ROOM, Miriam and Henry observe with stunned impotence...

Catherine pulls free from the apparatus and drops to her knees, exhausted, pale, trembling... And relieved.

119 INT./EXT. HELICOPTER - DAY 119

The chopper roars across the sky. As they head northeast, away from the urban and toward the rural, Novak gazes out the window, trying to stay focused, fighting any after-effects of the drugs. The pilot communicates via headset...

PILOT
Agent Novak? Go ahead...

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: 119

NOVAK
Cole?

A120 INT. FBI VEHICLE - DAY A120

Cole leads a line of EIGHT SQUAD CARS down the highway, sirens blaring and lights flashing...

(CONTINUED)

A120 CONTINUED: A120

COLE
Lattimer sold the hoist to a guy named Bainbridge who tried to build a machine works out near Delano. Bainbridge ends up in bankruptcy court and the state winds up with the land--it's just sitting there...

NOVAK
Delano?

COLE
Yep. And guess who they hired to seal up the place?

NOVAK
You're kidding me.

COLE
I never kid. My wife hates it. Says I'm too serious.

B120 INT. HELICOPTER - DAY B120

Novak locates Delano on the map. The pilot grins and pushes the chopper to top speed.

NOVAK
Where's the land?

COLE
Twenty miles southeast of Delano off Interstate 99...

The pilot locates it on the map.

PILOT
Got it.

NOVAK
You on your way?

COLE
Hell yes.

Novak and the pilot grin and push the chopper to top speed.

120 OMIT 120

121 INT. THE CELL - DAY 121

The water is near the ceiling. Kicking her legs to keep afloat, Julia DIGS with the ring and we see she has created a gap between the light fixture housing and an unused PIPE leading to the surface. She pushes, but can't get anything to move. The opening will get no bigger. Julia sucks the last bit of oxygen and swims to the bottom of the cell. Searching for something, she finds a juice box and pulls out the DRINKING STRAW...

122 OMIT 122

123 INT. HELICOPTER - DAY 123

Novak scans the topography of the FARMS below, listening to a new report...

124 OMIT 124

125 INT. THE CELL - DAY 125

Julia is entirely underwater but alive. She uses the straw to suck oxygen through the gap in the ceiling, but it's difficult to tread water and her lungs are aching...

126 INT. HELICOPTER - DAY 126

Novak uses binoculars to scan the land near the city of Banning. He searches... But the pilot spots it.

PILOT
That's it!

127 INT. THE CELL - DAY 127

Julia tries to hold herself up by pressing her arms and legs against the walls, but as she does, the straw slips from her mouth... She reaches for it, but only succeeds in pushing it away from her. It heads for the drain... and disappears.

128 EXT. ABANDONED FARM HOUSE - DAY 128

The helicopter lands and Novak jumps out. He knows this is the place. He RUNS into the barn, but there's nothing, no sign of her... The pilot looks at him with a true sense of loss...

129 INT. THE CELL - DAY 129

As Julia desperately tries to find the straw through the tiny holes of the drain, we see for the first time an expression which tells us she's given up... THUMP-THUMP-THUMP. The cell starts to vibrate. A repetitive noise--WHUP-WHUP-WHUP--comes from above... She swims to the top of the cell and POUNDS at the ceiling...

130 EXT. ABANDONED FARM HOUSE - DAY 130

Fighting exhaustion and the side effects of the drugs, Novak pushes on. *Think, Peter, think...* His eyes find the WATER TANKS and he SHOUTS at the helicopter...

NOVAK
CUT THE ENGINE!

As the motor dies, Novak listens... And listens... There it is... Water in pipes beneath his feet. And very faintly, a pounding... He follows the sound, searching the earth... It's clearer now, louder... Novak tosses aside rusted junk and the pilot runs to assist him. Together they expose the entrance to the underground sanctuary.

131 INT. THE CELL - OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY 131

Novak drops to the floor below. Instantly affected by the similarities and differences to the idealized cell of Stargher's mind, he feels another wave of dizziness, but pushes on...

And is hit hard by the sight of drowned Julia, her motionless body floating past him... HER EYES OPEN and bubble drift from her nose and mouth. Novak BANGS on the Plexiglas and calls to her...

NOVAK
JULIA!

She PANICS when she sees him, so Novak pulls his I.D. BADGE and smacks it against the glass.

NOVAK (cont'd)
MOVE ASIDE!

He pulls his gun and takes aim. Julia swims to the top of the cell and presses herself against the ceiling. BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG-BANG. Novak fires a circle of shots into the thick plastic. Water slowly leaks, but the damn thing is still solid. He lifts a rusted STEEL POLE and SWINGS at the bullet-damaged section... CRACK! CRASH! WATER POURS FROM THE CELL! Julia's body descends on the torrent of water.

Novak reaches inside and pulls her to safety... He's just about to give her CPR when she coughs, sputters, and thirstily drinks in oxygen. Holding her tightly, Novak sinks to the floor, the water from the cell spilling everywhere...

132 EXT. ABANDONED FARM HOUSE - DAY 132

Cole's Suburban leads a contingent of FBI vehicles and local police cars onto the property, sirens blaring...

133 INT. THE CELL - DAY 133

Hearing the sirens, Novak relaxes. For the first time in god knows how long, he relaxes. And holds Julia Hickson as if his life depended on it.

FADE OUT.

134-137 OMIT 134-137

FADE IN:

138 INT. STARGHER HOUSE - ATTIC - DAY 138

A team of FBI AGENTS catalogue, photograph, and bag virtually everything in the house. All the little bits and pieces of Stargher's life...

Novak and Ramsey are here, but Novak is dressed casually in his "civilian" clothes--jeans, faded shirt, and cowboy boots. He is immersed in the collages and sculptures of dolls and animal bones--the troubling "art" of Stargher when just a boy. Ramsey, dressed in his conservative suit, supervises the other agents, but one eye is always on his friend.

NOVAK
Thanks for letting me come by.

RAMSEY
It's your case, Peter.

NOVAK
Not anymore...

Ramsey's WALKIE-TALKIE crackles and he answers...

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Ramsey.
(listens)
Thanks, I'll tell him.

Having expected the call, Ramsey tells his curious friend...

RAMSEY (cont'd)
Somebody outside for you...

Novak moves to the window and sees Catherine in her Volvo, waiting at a checkpoint, Valentine in the seat next to her.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED: 138

NOVAK
(surprised but pleased)
What's she doing here?

RAMSEY
She said she wanted to see his home.

NOVAK
Pretty fucking strange...

RAMSEY
She's keeping his dog, for christ's sake. I'd say "pretty fucking strange" is par for the course.

Novak grins and heads for the stairs...

RAMSEY
Peter...
(as Novak stops)
This just isn't right...

NOVAK
I said I would take the heat and I meant it.

RAMSEY
But...

NOVAK
(interrupting)
Gordon?
(Ramsey shuts up)
Tell Jeannie I say hello.

The two men smile and shake hands. Novak disappears from view. Ramsey moves to the window and looks at Catherine...

RAMSEY
Sure you wanted to see his home...

139 EXT. STARGHER HOUSE - DAY 139

As Novak exits, he sees Catherine waiting for him. Valentine is in the car. She takes in the *presence* of Stargher's house, *feeling* its inherent terror and pain...

CATHERINE
Such a sad, horrible place...
(re his casual clothes)
I almost didn't recognize you. How long will you be a *civilian*?

139 CONTINUED: 139

NOVAK
A couple of weeks. 'Til the end of the inquiry. Then... Who knows?

He watches the FBI move back and forth from Stargher's house to waiting vans.

NOVAK (cont'd)
(changing the subject)
Ramsey told me they're going to let you do the... What do you call it...? The reversal, with Edward Baines.
(leery)
You sure about that?

CATHERINE
Absolutely.

NOVAK
You're not worried about what might happen...?

CATHERINE
I would never hurt Edward.

NOVAK
I'm not worried about him.

CATHERINE
I'll be fine.
(correction)
I am fine.
(her turn to question him)
What about you? Are you feeling all right?

NOVAK
Me? I'm great. Nothing happened to me. According to the FBI, what you people put me through was some kind of drug-fueled mindbender. All it did was trigger a memory I already had. Officially, the FBI found Julia Hickson through good old-fashioned detective work.

Both know the truth, so nothing more needs to be said.

CATHERINE
(changing the subject)
How is she? Julia...?

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED: (2) 139

NOVAK
Julia Hickson is just fine. She'll get married, have a family, and lead a beautiful life.

This is what Novak must believe to maintain his sanity. Catherine doesn't question it. Instead, she steers away...

CATHERINE
Two weeks. What're you going to do?

NOVAK
I thought I'd go visit my brother in Pittsburgh. His wife just had a baby... Be nice to see him...

Catherine nods. More awkward silence. Something more should be said, but neither is capable of it...

CATHERINE
Then... Hello and goodbye, I guess.

NOVAK
So long, Valentine.

He smiles and walks away.

CATHERINE
Peter?

He stops and turns. Feeling a need for connection, as well as a moment of closure, Catherine hugs Novak...

CATHERINE (cont'd)
Take care.

And Novak, for perhaps the first time in a long time, returns the gesture and hugs Catherine. Valentine barks and they separate. Catherine smiles and waves goodbye as she walks to her car. Novak takes one last look at Stargher's house and moves to his own vehicle.

We linger on CHILDREN playing in the nearby PRESCHOOL PLAYGROUND. THE CAMERA PULLS BACK until we are watching the kids through the window, high up in the ATTIC of Stargher's house... As the CAMERA PANS across the shelves, detailing the ARTIFACTS of Stargher's life, we continue to hear the children outside. Laughing, shouting, shrieking...

Who knows what their fate will be?

FADE TO BLACK.